What the Bible teaches about the unseen world — and why it matters

SUPER NATURAL

Michael S. Heiser

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Editor: David Lambert
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To my mom and dad,
Ed and Jan Speraw.

Who would have seen this coming?
I think we know.
1 SAMUEL 1:1–28

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Acknowledgments

Since *Supernatural* is based on my book *The Unseen Realm*, the thoughts expressed in the acknowledgments to that book are fitting here, albeit in abbreviated form.

Thanks are due to the online discussion group created soon after I decided that the divine council and the unseen world of biblical theology would be the focal points of my academic career. Not surprisingly, I called it the Divine Council Study Group. The DCSG disbanded in 2004 after I graduated from my doctoral program and started work at Logos Bible Software, but the exercise helped prepare me for writing both books.

The Unseen Realm began as a manuscript entitled *The Myth That Is True* that I produced for interested followers of website content and my novel, *The Façade.* Much of that material appeared first in a newsletter and later a blog, the idea being to make myself accountable to produce something each month. The first full draft of "the Myth book," as it came to be called, was finished in 2012. The manuscript improved in the wake of reader feedback. Specific contributors are listed in the acknowledgments to *The Unseen Realm*.

The major forces behind the publication of *The Unseen Realm*—and, therefore, *Supernatural*—were three executives at Faithlife Corporation/Logos Bible Software: Bob Pritchett, Dale Pritchett, and Bill Nienhuis. Not only did they succeed in taking my manuscript to the next level, but they foresaw the need for a distilled version of its content. *Supernatural* is therefore a product of their vision.

Dave Lambert, my editor for *The Unseen Realm*, also edited *Supernatural.* The benefit of his expertise and experience can be found on every page. He kept the person in the pew in my head.

Finally, I’m grateful to my wife, Drenna. She makes everything I do possible.

CHAPTER **ONE**

Believing the Bible

Do you really believe what the Bible says?

To some, that may seem like an odd question to ask in a book likely to be read mostly by Christians. But I don't think it's so odd. The Bible has some pretty strange things in it—things that are hard to believe, especially in the modern world.

I'm not talking about the big stuff, such as whether Jesus was God come to earth, who then died on the cross and rose from the dead. I'm not even thinking of miracle stories like the exodus, when God rescued Israel from Egypt by making a way for them through the Red Sea. Most Christians would say they believe those things. After all, if you don't believe in God and Jesus, or that they could do miraculous things, what's the point of saying you're a Christian?

I'm talking about the little-known supernatural stuff you run into occasionally when reading the Bible but rarely hear about in church.

Here's an example. In 1 Kings 22, there's a story about a wicked king of Israel, Ahab. He wants to join forces with the king of Judah to attack an enemy at a place called Ramoth-gilead. Judah's king wants a glimpse into the future—he wants to know what's going to happen if they attack. So the two kings ask Ahab's prophets and get thumbs up all around. But those prophets are just telling Ahab what he wants to hear, and both kings know it. So they decide to ask God's prophet, a fellow named Micaiah. What he says isn't good news for Ahab:

> Therefore hear the word of the LORD: I saw the LORD sitting on his throne, and all the host of heaven standing beside him on his right hand and on his left; and the LORD said, "Who will entice Ahab, that

> he may go up and fall at Ramoth-gilead?" And one said one thing, and another said another. Then a spirit came forward and stood before the LORD, saying, "I will entice him." And the LORD said to him, "By what means?" And he said, "I will go out, and will be a lying spirit in the mouth of all his prophets." And he said, "You are to entice him, and you shall succeed; go out and do so." Now therefore behold, the LORD has put a lying spirit in the mouth of all these your prophets; the LORD has declared disaster for you. (1 Kings 22:19–23)

Did you catch what the Bible's asking you to believe? That God meets with a group of spirit beings to decide what happens on earth? Is that for real?

Here's another example, courtesy of Jude:

> And the angels who did not stay within their own position of authority, but left their proper dwelling, he has kept in eternal chains under gloomy darkness until the judgment of the great day. (Jude 1:6)

God sent a bunch of angels to an underground prison? Really?

As I said, the Bible has a lot of strange things in it, especially about the unseen, spiritual world. I've met many Christians who have no trouble with the Bible's less controversial (at least among Christians) teachings about the supernatural, such as who Jesus was and what he did, but passages like this tend to make them more than a little uneasy, so they ignore them. I've seen that tendency up close. My wife and I once visited a church where the pastor was preaching a series based on 1 Peter. The morning he hit 1 Peter 3:18–22, the first thing he said after getting behind the pulpit was, "We're going to skip these verses. They're just too weird." What he meant by *weird* was that those verses contained supernatural elements that just didn't fit into his theology. Such as:

> For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive in the Spirit. After being made alive, he went and made proclamation to the imprisoned spirits—to those who were

> disobedient long ago when God waited patiently in the days of Noah while the ark was being built. (1 Pet. 3:18–20 NIV)

Who—and where—were these imprisoned spirits? That pastor either didn't know or didn't like the answer, so he simply chose to ignore these verses.

As a Bible scholar, I've learned that strange passages (and lots of other little-known and little-understood parts of Scripture) are actually very important. They teach specific ideas about God, the unseen world, and our own lives. Believe it or not, if we were aware of them and understood what they meant, as difficult and puzzling as they are, it would change the way we think about God, each other, why we're here, and our ultimate destiny.

In the first letter the apostle Paul wrote to the Corinthians, Paul got upset at how believers in that church were taking each other to court to settle disputes. It was a waste of time and emotional energy, he felt, as well as a negative reflection on the faith. He gasped, "Don't you people know you're going to judge the world? Don't you know you're going to rule over angels!" (1 Cor. 6:3, my paraphrase).

Judge the world? *Rule over angels*?

What Paul's talking about in that puzzling verse is both mind-blowing and life-changing. The Bible connects the activities of supernatural beings with our lives and destinies. We *will* someday judge the world. We *will* rule over angels, just as Paul said. More about that later.

The reason Paul can say what he said to the Corinthians—and to us—is that the story of the Bible is about how God created us and desires that we be part of his heavenly family. It's no accident that the Bible uses terms drawn from family relationships—such as sharing a home and working together—to collectively describe God, Jesus, the beings of the unseen world, and believers, *you and me*. God wants humanity to be part of his family and of his rule over creation.

We all know the concept *as in heaven, so on earth.* It's drawn from ideas and even phrasing found in the Lord's Prayer (Matt. 6:10). From the very beginning, God wanted his human family to live with him in a perfect world—along with the family he already had in the unseen world, his heavenly host. That story—God's goal, its opposition by the powers of

darkness, its failure, and its ultimate future success—is what this book is about, just as it's what the Bible is about. And we can't appreciate the drama of the Bible's story if we don't include *all* the actors—including the supernatural characters who are part of the epic but who are ignored by many Bible teachers.

The members of God's heavenly host are not peripheral or insignificant or unrelated to our story, the human story, in the Bible. They play a central role. But modern Bible readers too often read right past, without grasping them, the fascinating ways the supernatural world is present in dozens of the most familiar episodes in the Bible. It took me decades to see what I now see in the Bible—and I want to share with you the fruit of those years of study.

But let's not lose track of the question I asked at the beginning. *Do you really believe what the Bible says?* That's where the rubber meets the road. It won't do you any good to learn what the Bible really says about the unseen world and how it intersects with your life if you don't believe it.

In 2 Kings 6:8–23, the prophet Elisha is in trouble (again). An angry king sends troops to surround his house. When his servant panics, Elisha tells him, "Do not be afraid, for those who are with us are more than those who are with them." Before the servant can object, Elisha prays, "O LORD, please open his eyes that he may see." God answers on the spot: "So the LORD opened the eyes of the young man, and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha."

Elisha's prayer is my prayer for you. May God open your eyes to see, so that you'll never be able to think about the Bible the same way again.

CHAPTER **TWO**

The Unseen Realm: God and the Gods

People are fascinated by the supernatural and the superhuman. Just think about the entertainment industry in recent years. Thousands of books, television shows, and movies in the past decade have been about angels, aliens, monsters, demons, ghosts, witches, magic, vampires, werewolves, and superheroes. Many of Hollywood's blockbuster franchises feature the supernatural: the *X-Men*, the *Avengers*, the Harry Potter series, *Superman*, and the *Twilight* saga. Television shows like *Fringe* and, of course, *Supernatural* and *X-Files* have dedicated followings even long after filming new episodes ends. And really, haven't these things *always* been popular—in tales, in books, in art?

Why?

One answer is that they're an escape from the ordinary. They offer us a world that's more interesting and exciting than our own. There's something about good versus evil, magnified on a cosmic scale, that thrills us. The epic struggle by the heroes of Middle Earth (Gandalf, Frodo, and company) against the Dark Lord Sauron in *The Lord of the Rings* trilogy has captivated readers (and now movie-goers) for over a half-century now. The more otherworldly the villain, the more spectacular the triumph.

On another level, people are drawn to other worlds because, as the book of Ecclesiastes puts it, God has "put eternity into [our] hearts" (Eccl. 3:11). There's something about the human condition that longs for something beyond human experience—something divine. The apostle Paul wrote about this yearning too. He taught that it comes from just being alive in the world God has made. The creation bears witness to a creator, and therefore to a realm beyond our own (Rom. 1:18–23). In fact, Paul said this impulse was so powerful that it had to be willfully suppressed (v. 18).

And yet we don't seem to think of the epic story of the Bible in the same way we think of our own tales of the supernatural in books, movies, and legend. There are reasons for that, and they go beyond the lack of special effects. For some, the Bible's characters are too ordinary or grandfatherly. They don't feel dynamic or heroic. After all, these are the same people and the same stories we've been hearing since Sunday school as kids. Then there's the cultural barrier. It's hard for us to identify with what seems like an endless parade of ancient shepherds and men wearing robes, like so many actors in your church's nativity play.

But I think an even bigger factor in why science fiction or supernatural fantasy captures our imagination more easily is how we've been taught to think about the unseen world of the Bible. What I've heard in church over the years doesn't just miss the boat—it makes the supernatural boring. And even worse, the church's teaching emasculates the unseen, supernatural world, rendering it powerless.

A lot of what Christians imagine to be true about the unseen world isn't. Angels don't have wings. (Cherubim don't count because they are never called angels and are creaturely. Angels are always in human form.) Demons don't sport horns and a tail, and they aren't here to make us sin (we do that just fine on our own). And while the Bible describes demonic possession in rightfully awful ways, intelligent evil has more sinister things to do than make sock puppets out of people. And on top of that, angels and demons are minor players. Church never seems to get to the big boys and their agenda.

The Gods Are Real

I asked you in the first chapter if you *really* believe what the Bible says. Consider this a pop quiz.

The Bible says God has a task force of divine beings who carry out his decisions. It's referred to as God's assembly, council, or court (Ps. 89:5–7; Dan. 7:10). One of the clearest verses about it is Psalm 82:1. The Good News Translation puts it well: "God presides in the heavenly council; in the assembly of the gods he gives his decision."

If you think about it, that's a startling verse! It rattled me the first time I really looked at it. But what the verse means is what it plainly and simply says. Like any verse, Psalm 82:1 has to be understood in the context of what else the Bible says—in this case, what it says about *the gods* and how that term should be defined.

The original Hebrew word translated "gods" is *elohim*. Many of us have thought of *elohim* for so long in just one single sense—as one of the names of God the Father—that it may be hard for us to think of it in its wider meaning. But the word refers to *any* inhabitant of the unseen spiritual world. That's why you'll find it used of God himself (Gen. 1:1), demons (Deut. 32:17), and the human dead in the afterlife (1 Sam. 28:13). For the Bible, any disembodied being whose home address is the spirit world is an *elohim*.

The Hebrew term doesn't refer to a specific set of abilities only God has. The Bible distinguishes God from all other gods in other ways, not by using the word *elohim*. For instance, the Bible commands the gods to worship the God of the Bible (Ps. 29:1). He is their creator and king (Ps. 95:3; 148:1–5). Psalm 89:6–7 (GNT) says, "No one in heaven is like you, LORD; none of the heavenly beings is your equal [1 Kings 8:23; Ps. 97:9]. You are feared in the council of the holy ones." The Bible writers are pretty blunt about the God of Israel having no equal—he is the "God of gods" (Deut. 10:17; Ps. 136:2).

These beings in the "council of the holy ones" are real. In the first chapter of this book, I quoted a passage in which God met with his heavenly host to decide how to get rid of King Ahab. In that passage, the members of this heavenly group were called spirits. If we believe the spirit world is real and is inhabited by God and by spiritual beings he has created (such as angels), we have to admit that God's supernatural task force, described in the verses I've quoted above and many others, is also real. Otherwise, we pay mere lip service to spiritual reality.

And since the Bible identifies these divine council members as spirits, we know the gods aren't just idols of stone or wood. Statues don't work for God in a heavenly council. It's true that people in the ancient world who worshipped the rival gods did make idols. But they knew the idols they made with their own hands weren't the real powers. Those handcrafted

idols were just objects their gods could inhabit to receive sacrifices and dispense knowledge to their followers, who performed rituals to solicit the gods to come to them and take up residence in the idol.

Council Structure and Business

The gods of Psalm 82:1 are called "sons of the Most High [God]" later in the psalm (v. 6). The "sons of God" appear several times in the Bible, usually in God's presence (as in Job 1:6; 2:1). Job 38:7 tells us they were around before God began to fashion the earth and create humanity.

And that is very interesting. God calls these spiritual beings his sons. Since he created them, the "family" language makes sense, in the same way you refer to your offspring as your son or daughter because you participated in their creation. But besides being their Father, God is also their king. In the ancient world, kings often ruled through their extended families. Kingship was passed on to heirs. Dominion was a family business. God is Lord of his council. And his sons have the next highest rank by virtue of their relationship with him. But as we'll discuss throughout this book, something happened—some of them became disloyal.

The sons of God are also decision makers. We know from 1 Kings 22 (and many other passages) that God's business involved interacting with human history. When God decided it was time for wicked Ahab to die, he left it up to his council to decide how that would happen.

The divine council meetings in Psalm 82 and 1 Kings 22 are not the only ones related to us in the Bible. A couple of them determined the fate of empires.

In Daniel 4, Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, was punished by God with temporary insanity. That sentence was handed down by "the decree of the Most High" (Dan. 4:24) and "the decree of the watchers" (Dan. 4:17). *Watchers* was a term used for divine beings of God's council. It referred to how they were ever watchful over the affairs of humanity; they never slept.

These biblical scenes of divine council sessions tell us God's council members *participate* in God's rule. In at least some cases, God decrees what

he wants done but gives his supernatural agents freedom to decide the means.

Angels participate in God's council as well. In the original languages of the Bible, the terms translated *angel* in the Old and New Testaments actually mean *messenger*. The word *angel* is basically a job description. Angels deliver messages to people. We'll learn more about angels and their duties—as well as the other duties of God's council members—later in the book.

Why This Matters

Your reaction to everything you've read in this book up to this point may be something like, "Fascinating stuff—I've never seen that in the Bible before. But what implications does all this information have, if any at all, for my daily life and the way my church functions?" And the answer is, the truths presented in this book have *everything* to do with our understanding of who God is, and how we relate to him, and what our purpose is on earth. To help clarify that, I'll conclude each chapter with a section like this one that unpacks the practical implications of that chapter's truths.

In this chapter, we've discussed how the Bible describes God's cosmic administration and what insights those descriptions give us into God and, ultimately, how God relates to us.

First, God's heavenly family business is a template for how he relates to his earthly family. We'll discuss that further in the next chapter, but here's an example: You might have been wondering why God needs a council anyway. God shouldn't *need* help doing anything, even in the spiritual world. He's God! But the Bible is clear that he uses lesser beings to get things done.

He doesn't *need* a divine council, but he chooses to make use of one. And he doesn't need us either. If he chose, God could just speak out loud to all the people who need the gospel, give everyone all the encouragement they need to turn to him, and call it good. He could persuade people to love others by putting his voice into their heads. But he doesn't. Instead, he uses people—you and me—to get the job done.

Second, God could just predetermine events to make everything turn out the way he wants. But he doesn't. In the story of King Ahab, God let his heavenly assistants decide how to carry out his will. In other words, he let them use their free will. That tells us that not everything is predetermined. And that's true not only in the unseen world—it's also true in our world.

In the Bible, the unseen world has structure. God is CEO. Those who work for him are his family. They share dominion. They participate in how the company runs.

Amazingly enough, the Bible talks the same way about humanity. From the very beginning in Eden, God created humanity to rule the earth with him. God told Adam and Eve, "Have many children, so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control" (Gen. 1:28 GNT). Adam and Eve were the children of God—God's earthly family. God wanted to live with them and let them participate in making the whole world like Eden.

That's a familiar concept to most readers. What isn't so apparent is that Adam and Eve weren't the only members of God's family in Eden. His divine family was also there. Eden was where God lived—and where God lives, so does his family. We think of heaven as a place where we'll live with God and his angels—his divine family. That's the way it was originally intended to be, and the way it *will* be. It's no coincidence that the Bible ends with heaven come back to earth in a new, global Eden (Rev. 21–22).

To understand our destiny, we need to go back to the time when God's two families occupied the same space. We need to go back to the garden.

CHAPTER **THREE**

Once and Future Kings

We've had a brief introduction to God's heavenly council—his unseen family and task force. There's a lot more to all that—we need to look, especially, at how major players like Jesus and Satan fit into the picture. But before we return to what goes on in the unseen world, we need to think in a fresh way about ourselves. God's rule in the unseen spiritual world through his council is a template for his rule on earth—what theologians call the kingdom of God. All of that began in Genesis, in the garden of Eden.

Eden—God's Home Office

What's the first thing you think of when you hear "garden of Eden"? Most people I've talked to think of Adam and Eve. Eden was their home. That's where God put them (Gen. 2:15–25).

But Eden was also *God's home*. Ezekiel refers to Eden as "the garden of God" (Ezek. 28:13; 31:8–9). No surprise, really. What might be surprising is that, right after calling Eden "the garden of God," Ezekiel calls it "the holy mountain of God" (v. 28:14). In many ancient religions, luxurious gardens and inaccessible mountains were considered the home of the gods. The Bible uses both descriptions for Eden. Eden was God's home and, therefore, where he conducted business. It was his headquarters, or home office.

And where God is, his council is with him.

God's Imagers

One of the most important verses in the Bible tips us off that both God *and* his council were in Eden. In Genesis 1:26 God says, "Let *us* make humankind in *our* image" (LEB, emphasis added). God announces his intention to a group. Who's he talking to? His heavenly host—his council. He's not talking to the other members of the Trinity, because God can't know something they don't! And here the group he's addressing learns what God has decided to do.

The announcement is easy to understand. It would be like me saying to some friends, "Let's get pizza!" *Let's do this!* Clear enough. But there's something else we don't want to miss. God actually doesn't include the group in bringing about his decision.

Unlike other divine council sessions we've seen, the members of God's council don't participate in this decision. When humankind is created in the next verse (Gen. 1:27), God is the only one creating. The creation of humanity is something God handled himself. Going back to my pizza analogy, if I followed my announcement by driving everyone to the pizza place and insisted on paying, I would be the one doing all the work. That's what we see going on here.

It makes sense that God would be the only one creating humans. The divine beings of his council don't have that kind of power. But that produces another oddity. In Genesis 1:27, humans are created in *God's* image ("God created humankind in *his* image," LEB, emphasis added). What happened to "*our* image" from verse 26?

Actually, nothing. The exchange between "our image" and "his image" in Genesis 1:26–27 reveals something fascinating. God's statement—"Let us make humankind in our image"—means that he and the ones he's speaking to share something in common. Whatever that is, humans will also share it once God creates them. Not only are we like God in some way, but we are also like the divine beings of his council.

That "something" is communicated by the phrase "image of God." A better translation of Genesis 1:26 would be that God created humans *as* his image. To be human is to *be* God's imager. We are God's representatives, so to speak.

The image of God isn't an ability given to us by God, like intelligence. We can lose abilities, but we cannot lose the status of being God's imager. That would require not being human! Every human, from conception to death, will always be human and always be God's imager. This is why human life is sacred.

How do we represent God? We saw in the previous chapter that God shares his authority with the divine beings of his unseen task force. He does the same thing with humans on earth. God is the high king of all things visible and invisible. He rules. He shares that rule with his family in the spiritual world and the human world. We're here to participate in God's plan to make the world all he wants it to be and enjoy it with him.

Eventually God showed us how we should do that. Jesus is the ultimate example of representing God. He's called the image of the invisible God (Col. 1:15) and the exact imprint of God (Heb. 1:3). We are to imitate Jesus for that reason (Rom. 8:29; 2 Cor. 3:18).

Two Councils, One Destiny

There's a drift in all this I hope you're catching. Humans are basically God's administration—his council—*on earth*. We were made to live in God's presence, with his heavenly family. We were made to enjoy him and serve him forever. Originally, that was meant to also happen on earth. Eden was where heaven and earth intersected. God and his council members occupied the same space as humanity.

But to what end?

God told Adam and Eve, "Be fruitful and multiply and fill the earth and subdue it, and have dominion … over every living thing that moves on the earth" (Gen. 1:28). This was the task for God's imagers. They would serve God as steward-kings over creation. Humanity's job was to overspread the earth and extend Eden to the entire planet—to grow the kingdom of God. That job was too big for two people, so God wanted Adam and Eve to produce children.

As we know, Adam and Eve and their progeny failed. Humanity sinned. Had that not occurred, the earth would have been gradually transformed to a

global Eden. We would have had everlasting life on a perfected planet, living with God and his spiritual family.

God loved humanity, so he forgave Adam and Eve. But the rest of humanity from that point on was destined to follow in Adam and Eve's footsteps. We all sin and deserve death without God's intervention (Rom. 6:23). We are mortal and, therefore, sinners. We need salvation.

The idea of God wanting us to join his divine family, to be part of his council and live in his presence, helps us understand some amazing things the Bible says.

It explains why the Bible refers to believers as "sons of God" or "children of God" (John 1:12; 11:52; Gal. 3:26; 1 John 3:1–3). It explains why believers are described as being "adopted" into God's family (Gal. 4:5–6; Rom. 8:14–6). It explains why we are said to be "heirs" of God and his kingdom (Gal. 4:7; Titus 3:7; James 2:5) and "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4; see also 1 John 3:2). It explains why, after Jesus returns, he says he will grant believers "to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God" (Rev. 2:7). It explains why he's promised to share the rule of the nations with us (Rev. 2:26–28), even his own throne (Rev. 3:21). We move *forward* through this life *back* to Eden. *Heaven will return to earth*.

That is what we'll be doing in the afterlife—ruling in the new global Eden. We'll be enjoying what Adam and Eve were originally intended to help produce. Everlasting life is not about playing harps and singing 24/7. It's about discovering and relishing the unblemished creation in all its unimaginable fullness alongside God himself, the risen Jesus, and our fellow imagers, human *and* supernatural.

Why This Matters

It may not seem like it, but a lot of life-changing ideas extend from all this. Living consciously as though our lives represent God and further his plans —even if we don't yet see that plan—would change the way we approach each day.

God's original plan was to make the whole earth like Eden. God wanted humans to participate in expanding his good rule over all the earth, as it was

in Eden. He told Adam and Eve to have children and become lords and stewards of creation (Gen. 1:26–28). That command wasn't forgotten after the fall. In fact, it was repeated after the awful events of the flood (Gen. 8:17; 9:1). Though Eden was lost, God intends that it be restored. Ultimately, his rule—his kingdom—will return in its full scope when Jesus comes back and God creates a new heaven and earth (one that, in Revelation 21 and 22, looks a lot like Eden). In the meantime, we can spread the truth of God and the gospel of Jesus everywhere. We can also represent God to everyone we meet and in every place. We are God's agents to restore Eden in the here and now, looking forward to the day when Jesus brings that plan to a climax.

Consciously thinking of ourselves as God's agents—his imagers—means *the decisions we make matter*. Christians, no longer lost in sin, can fulfill God's plan with the help of the Holy Spirit. We are here to spread the goodness of life with God and tell people who need the gospel how they can enjoy that too. Our lives intersect with many people. Their memory of those encounters ripples through their lives and through all the people whose lives they touch. We are a glimpse either of life with God or of a life without God. There's no middle ground.

The knowledge that all humans are God's imagers should also prompt us to see human life for the sacred thing that it is. This extends beyond momentous ethical decisions that deal with life and death. What we've learned has an impact on so much of how we see each other and relate to each other. Racism has no place in God's world. Injustice is incompatible with representing God. The abuse of power—at home, at work, or in government—is ungodly. It is not how God dealt with his children in Eden, so it has no place in how we deal with fellow imagers.

Last, representing God means every job that honors him is a *spiritual* calling. Every legitimate task can be part of moving our world toward Eden and blessing fellow imagers—or not. God doesn't view people in ministry as more holy or special because of their job descriptions. God cares about how each of us represents him where we are. We either stand against the darkness, sharing the life God wants everyone to ultimately experience, or we don't. The opportunity doesn't need to be spectacular; it just needs to be taken.

As spectacular as God's intention in Eden was, the vision died with equal speed. *Only* God is perfect. Freedom in the hands of imperfect beings —even divine ones—can have disastrous results.

CHAPTER **FOUR**

Divine Rebellions

I ended the previous chapter with the thought that free will in the hands of imperfect beings, whether divine or human, can have disastrous results. That's an understatement. Some catastrophes in the early chapters of the Bible, all of them involving both humans and supernatural beings, illustrate the point.

Recall that God decided to share his authority with both divine beings in the supernatural realm and human beings on earth. That was the backdrop to God's statement, "Let *us* make humankind in *our* image" (Gen. 1:26, emphasis added) and the fact that God then created humans in *his* image. Spiritual beings and humans are imagers of God. We share his authority and represent him as co-rulers.

On one hand, that was a wonderful decision. Free will is part of being like God. We couldn't be like him if we didn't have it. Without free will, concepts like love and self-sacrifice die. If you are merely programmed to "love," there is no decision in it. It isn't real. Scripted words and acts aren't genuine. Thinking about this takes me back to the last of the original Star Wars movies, *The Return of the Jedi.* The spirit of Obiwan Kenobi tells Luke his father, Darth Vader, "is more machine now than man." And yet, in the end, we find that isn't true. Vader saves Luke from the emperor at the cost of his own life. He wasn't just a programmed machine. His decision came from the heart, his humanity—his own free will.

But there's a dark side to God's decision. Granting intelligent beings freedom means they can and will make wrong choices or intentionally rebel. And that's basically guaranteed to happen, since the only truly perfect being is God. He's the only one he can really trust. This is why things could, and did, go wrong in Eden.

Trouble in Paradise

Think about the setting in Eden. Adam and Eve aren't alone. God is there with his council. Eden is the divine/human headquarters for "subduing" the rest of the earth (Gen. 1:26–28)—spreading the life of Eden to the rest of the planet. But one member of the council isn't happy with God's plans.

Just as we saw in Genesis 1, there are hints in Genesis 3 that Eden is home to other divine beings. In verse 22, after Adam and Eve have sinned, God says: "Behold, the man has become like *one of us* in knowing good and evil" (emphasis added). That phrase is the same sort of signpost we saw in Genesis 1:26 ("our image").

We know the main character of Genesis 3, the Serpent, was not really a snake. He wasn't actually an animal. No effort to put him behind glass in a zoo would have been effective, and he would not have been amused. He was a divine being. Revelation 12:9 identifies him as the Devil, Satan.

Some Christians presume, based on Revelation 12:7–12, that there was an angelic rebellion shortly after creation:

> And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. And they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them any longer in heaven. And the great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him. (Rev. 12:7–9 LEB)

But the war in heaven described there is associated with the birth of the messiah (Rev. 12:4–5, 10 LEB):

> And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, in order that whenever she gave birth to her child he could devour it. And she gave birth to a son, a male child, who is going to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod, and her child was snatched away to God and to his throne.…
>
> And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying,

"Now the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his Christ have come,
because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down,
the one who accuses them before our God day and night.

The Bible gives no indication that, before the events in Eden, any of his imagers—human or divine—were opposed to God's will or were in rebellion. Circumstances changed dramatically in Genesis 3.

The Serpent's crime was that he freely chose to reject God's authority. God had determined that Adam and Eve would join the family business, so to speak. They would extend Eden on earth. But the enemy didn't want them there. He put himself in the place of God. He said in his heart, "I will ascend to heaven and set my throne above God's stars. I will preside on the mountain of the gods" (Isa. 14:13 NLT).

He got a rude awakening. Since the Serpent's deception led to Adam and Eve's sin, he was expelled from God's home (Ezek. 28:14–16) and banished to earth—"cut [or cast] down to the ground" in biblical language (Isa. 14:12)—the place where death reigns, where life is not everlasting. Instead of being lord of life, he became lord of the dead, which meant that the great enemy now had claim over all humans since the events in Eden meant the loss of earthly immortality. Humanity would now need to be redeemed to have eternal life with God in a new Eden.

The fallout (pun intended) was a series of curses. The curse upon the Serpent included a bit of prophecy. God said Eve's offspring and that of the Serpent would be at odds: "Then Yahweh God said to the serpent … I will put hostility between you and between the woman, and between your offspring and between her offspring" (Gen. 3:14–15 LEB). Who are Eve's offspring? Humanity. And who are the Serpent's offspring? Well, that's more abstract. The apostle John gives us examples—like the Jewish leaders who hated Jesus. "You are of your father the devil," Jesus told them (John 8:44). Jesus called his betrayer, Judas, a devil (John 6:70). The Serpent's offspring is anyone who stands against God's plan, just as he did.

The Bad Seed

It didn't take long for more trouble to arise. One of Adam and Eve's children became a murderer. Cain killed Abel, showing that he was "of the evil one" (1 John 3:12). As the human population grew in the biblical story, so did evil (Gen. 6:5).

Now comes another supernatural transgression that, although it may not be much discussed in Sunday morning sermons, had great impact on the expansion of wickedness on earth. This time there was more than one rebel. The evil contagion spreading through humanity in Genesis 6:5 is linked to the story in Genesis 6:1–4 about the sons of God fathering their own earthly children known as Nephilim.

The Bible doesn't say much else in Genesis about what happened, but pieces of the story show up elsewhere in the Bible, and in Jewish traditions outside the Bible the New Testament authors knew well and quoted in their writings.

For example, Peter and Jude write about the angels who sinned before the flood (2 Pet. 2:4–6 GNT; see also Jude 5–6). Some of what they say comes from Jewish sources outside the Bible. Peter and Jude say that the sons of God who committed this transgression were imprisoned under the earth—in other words, they're doing time in hell—until the last days. They'll be part of God's final judgment, something the Bible calls the "Day of the Lord."

Peter and Jude's sources are well-known to Bible scholars. One of them was a book called 1 Enoch. It was popular with Jews of Jesus' day and with Christians in the early church, even though it wasn't considered sacred and inspired. But Peter and Jude thought some of that content was important enough to include in the letters they wrote.

These sources speculate that the sons of God either wanted to "help" humanity by giving them divine knowledge, and then got sidetracked, or that they wanted to imitate God by creating their own imagers. They also include an explanation for where demons come from. Demons are the departed spirits of dead Nephilim killed before and during the flood. They roam the earth harassing humans and seeking re-embodiment. In books of the Bible that follow Genesis, descendants of the Nephilim of Genesis 6:1–4 are called Anakim and Rephaim (Num. 13:32–33; Deut. 2:10–11). Some

of these Rephaim show up in the underworld realm of the dead (Isa. 14:9–11) where the Serpent was cast down. New Testament writers would later call that place hell.

These ideas show us that early Jewish writers understood the threat of Genesis 6:1–4. The sons of God were trying to reformulate Eden, where the divine and the human coexisted, in their own way. They presumed to know better than God what should be happening on earth, just like the original enemy had. Alteration of God's plan to restore his rule ends up making a bad situation worse.

Not only was the episode of Genesis 6:1–4 a terrible echo of the seed of the Serpent—deliberate opposition to God—it was a prelude to worse things to come. During the days of Moses and Joshua, some of the opponents they run into when trying to claim the Promised Land were scattered giant clans (Deut. 2–3). These giants went by various names. In Numbers 13:32–33 they are called the Anakim. They are specifically said to be living descendants of the Nephilim—the offspring of the sons of God back in Genesis 6:1–4. The Old Testament tells us Israelites were fighting these oversized enemies until David's time. He took out Goliath (1 Sam. 17), and some of his men killed Goliath's brothers to finally end the threat (2 Sam. 21:15–22).

Why This Matters

The prophetic curse on the Serpent and the divine transgression that followed are the early stages of what theologians call spiritual warfare—the battle between good and evil, the long war against God and his people. It's a war fought on battlegrounds in two realms: the seen and the unseen.

As strange as these stories are, they teach an important lesson: God had divine competition when it came to human destiny. He still does. Opposition to God's will for earth and humanity is alive and well, in both the spiritual realm and within humankind. But God has his own plans for how heaven and earth will be reunified. Hostile interference won't go unpunished. Humanity is too valuable. God's own plan for his human family won't be altered or overturned.

These passages also teach positive lessons. While the long war against God can be traced back to God's decision to create imagers, human and divine, who would share his attribute of freedom, God is not the *cause* of evil.

There is no hint in the Bible that God prodded his imagers to disobey, or that their disobedience was predestined. The fact that God knows the future doesn't mean it's predestinated. We know that for certain from passages like 1 Samuel 23:1–14, which tells us about the time David saved the walled city of Keilah from the Philistines. After the battle, Saul learned that David was in the city. Saul had been trying to kill David for some time out of paranoid fear that David was going to take his throne. Saul sent an army to Keilah, hoping to trap David within the city walls. When David heard about Saul's plan, he asked God:

> "Will the leaders of Keilah betray me to him? And will Saul actually come as I have heard? O LORD, God of Israel, please tell me."
>
> And the LORD said, "He will come … Yes, they will betray you." (1 Sam. 23:11–12 NLT)

David then did what any of us would do—he got out of the city as fast as he could. *And that tells us why God's foreknowledge of events doesn't mean they are predestined*. 1 Samuel 23 has God foreknowing two events that never actually took place. That God foreknew there would be divine rebellion and human failure doesn't mean he *made* those things happen. Foreknowledge doesn't require predestination.

We need to view the events of the fall in this light. God knew Adam and Eve would fail. He wasn't surprised. He knows all things, real and possible. But the fact that God could foresee the entrance of evil and rebellion into his world, on the part of both humans and the divine rebel who seduced humanity to rebel, doesn't mean he caused it.

We can and should view the evil we experience in our own lives and times in the same way. God foresaw the fall and was ready with a plan to rectify it. He also knew we would be born sinners and fail (a lot—let's be honest). But he didn't predestine those failures. When we sin, we need to

own our sin. We sin because we choose to. We can't say God willed it, or that we had no choice because it was predestined.

But God loved us in that "while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. 5:6–8). He loved us despite knowing what we would do. He not only gave us the freedom to sin, he gave us the freedom to believe the gospel and live for Jesus.

God also knows—and we know, by experience—that bad things happen to people, even to Christians. Evil is in the world because people (and divine beings) have the freedom to do evil. Our God isn't a twisted deity who predestines awful things or who needs horrible crimes and sins to happen so some greater plan works out well. God doesn't need evil, period. His plans will move forward despite it—overcoming it and ultimately judging it.

We might ask why God doesn't just eliminate evil right now. There's a reason: For God to eliminate evil he'd have to eliminate his imagers, human and divine, who are not perfect like he is. That would solve the problem of evil, but it would mean that God's original idea, to create other divine agents and human beings to live and rule with him, was a huge mistake. God doesn't make mistakes.

We might also wish that God had never given humans freedom, but where would we be then? In choosing to give us freedom, God also chose not to make us mindless slaves or robots. That's the alternative to having free will. But since freedom is an attribute we share with God, without it we couldn't actually be imagers of God. God is no robot. He made us like himself. That wasn't a mistake either. God loved the idea of humanity too much to make the alternative decision. And so he devised a means to, after evil entered the world, redeem humanity, renew Eden, and wipe away every tear (Rev. 7:17; 21:4).

Our look at the long war against God is underway. God has a battle strategy. But the situation is going to get worse before he makes his first move.

CHAPTER **FIVE**

Cosmic Geography

The divine transgressions we looked at in the previous chapter had something in common. They were both supernatural rebellions aimed at co-opting God's plan for humanity and the restoration of his rule. In this chapter we'll look at another rebellion, one that originated with people.

This rebellion produced a predicament that we're all still part of, and that predicament involves supernatural beings. The titanic struggle for God's restoration strategy took a turn for the worse that only the return of Jesus will finally resolve.

The Tower of Babel

The story of the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1–9) is simultaneously one of the best-known and least-understood accounts in the Bible. Children learn about it in Sunday school as the time when God confused earth's human languages.

After the flood, God repeated the command he'd given to Adam and Eve to cover the earth. He was trying to kick-start the spread of his ruling influence through humanity. Once again, it didn't work. People refused. Rebellion in their hearts, they had a better idea, or so they thought. They decided to build a tower *to avoid being scattered* (Gen. 11:4). The logic seems odd. Sure, an amazing tower would make them famous (Gen. 11:4), but how would that prevent scattering across the earth?

The answer lies in the tower. Bible scholars and archaeologists know ancient Babylon and cities around it built towers called ziggurats. The purpose of the ziggurats was to provide places where people could meet the gods. *They were part of temple zones*. Rather than make the world like Eden

—to spread the knowledge and rule of God everywhere—the people wanted to bring God down at one spot.

That wasn't God's plan, and he wasn't pleased. Hence his statement—again to the members of his council—"Let *us* go down and mix up their language" (Gen. 11:7 GNT, emphasis added). God did so, and humanity was separated and scattered. The incident explains how the nations listed a chapter earlier in Genesis 10 came to be.

That's the story most Christians know. Now for the one they don't.

The Gods and Their Nations

Genesis 11 isn't the only passage that describes what happened at the Tower of Babel. Deuteronomy 32:8–9 describes it this way:

> When the Most High gave to the nations their inheritance, when he divided mankind, he fixed the borders of the peoples according to the number of the sons of God. But the LORD's portion is his people, Jacob his allotted heritage.

Some Bible translations have "sons of Israel" instead of "sons of God" in that first sentence. But *Israel didn't exist at the time of the Tower of Babel*. God only called Abraham after Babel (Gen. 12). "Sons of Israel" can't be right. "Sons of God" is the terminology found in the Dead Sea Scrolls, the oldest manuscripts of the Bible. The ESV has it right.

The wording is important. When God divided up the nations, *they were divided among the sons of God.* God allotted the nations to members of his divine council. This is the Bible's explanation for why other nations came to worship other gods. Until Babel, God wanted a relationship with all humanity. But the rebellion at Babel changed that. God decided to let members of his divine council govern the other nations.

God had judged humanity. Even after the flood they would not resume the kingdom plan he had begun in Eden. So God decided to create a new nation, his "portion" as Deuteronomy 32:9 says—Israel. He did this, beginning with the call of Abraham, in Genesis 12, the very next chapter after the Tower of Babel story.

God's allotment of the nations to other gods frames the entire Old Testament. How? The rest of the Old Testament is about the God of Israel and his people, the Israelites, in conflict with the gods of the other nations and the people who live in them.

That wasn't God's original intention. Yes, what he did at Babel to the nations was a judgment, but God never intended that the nations would be forever forsaken. When God made his covenant with Abraham, he made clear that "All the families on earth will be blessed" through Abraham and his offspring (Gen. 12:3 NLT). God was planning to bring the nations back into his family at some point.

Paul knew all this. In his sermon to the pagan philosophers in Athens he said:

> From one man he created all the nations throughout the whole earth. He decided beforehand when they should rise and fall, and he determined their boundaries.
>
> His purpose was for the nations to seek after God and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him—though he is not far from any one of us. (Acts 17:26–27 NLT)

Through Moses, God had warned his own people not to worship "the host of heaven" (Deut. 4:19–20), a label found elsewhere for the members of the divine council (1 Kings 22:19). Acts 17:26–27 makes it clear that God's purpose was that somehow the nations would still seek after him.

But the gods who had been set over the nations interfered with this plan in two ways.

We saw earlier in Psalm 82:1 that God had assembled the gods of the council. The full psalm tells us why. The gods of the nations had ruled those nations unjustly—in ways that were contrary to the true God's wishes and principles of justice. God indicted them as soon as the meeting began: "How long will you hand down unjust decisions by favoring the wicked?" (Ps. 82:2 NLT). After hammering them for two more verses on their injustice, the Lord described how the gods had failed to help the nations walking in darkness find the way back to the true God: "But these

oppressors know nothing; they are so ignorant! They wander about in darkness, while the whole world is shaken to the core" (Ps. 82:5 NLT).

Sadly, the Israelites wound up worshipping the gods "not allotted to them" (Deut. 29:26; see also 32:17) instead of seeking the true God. God's reaction was swift and harsh (Ps. 82:6–7): "I say, 'You are gods; you are all children of the Most High. But you will die like mere mortals and fall like every other ruler' " (NLT).

The gods would lose their immortality (Ps. 82:7) and die like men. We know from other passages that this judgment is something associated with the end times (Isa. 34:1–4). At the end of Psalm 82, the writer hopes for the day when God will finally reclaim the nations as his inheritance. As we'll see later, he'll get his wish in the New Testament.

The Deuteronomy 32 Worldview

Because of the Deuteronomy 32 worldview, *geography in the Bible is cosmic*. Ground is either holy, meaning dedicated to Yahweh, or it is the domain of another god. This worldview is reflected in many places in the Bible. For instance, in the Old Testament the book of Daniel refers to foreign nations being ruled by divine "princes" (Dan. 10:13, 20–21). Another example: When David was running from King Saul, he was forced out of Israel into Philistine territory. In 1 Samuel 26:19, David cried, "They have driven me out from the LORD's land to a country where I can only worship foreign gods" (GNT). David wasn't switching gods. He also wasn't denying that God was present everywhere. But Israel was holy ground, the place that belonged to the true God. David was stuck in the domain of another god.

My favorite Old Testament story that makes this point is found in 2 Kings 5. Naaman was a captain in the Syrian army. He was also a leper. After he followed Elisha's instructions to wash himself seven times in the Jordan River, he was miraculously healed of leprosy. Naaman told Elisha, "I know that there is no God in all the earth but in Israel" (5:15). The prophet wouldn't take payment, so Naaman humbly asked if he could load a mule with dirt to take home with him. *Dirt*? Why ask for dirt? Because that ground belonged to Israel's God. It was holy.

It's no accident that we see the same kind of thinking in the New Testament. Paul uses a range of terms for hostile divine beings (Eph. 1:20–21; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16; 2:15): rulers, authorities, powers, thrones. What do they have in common? They were all well-known terms used to describe geographical rulership.

The apostle Paul wrote two letters to the Corinthian church to address some situations he'd heard about. In the first letter, he told church leaders to expel a man who was living in unrepentant sexual sin (1 Cor. 5:1–13). Curiously, he wrote that they were to "deliver this man to Satan" (1 Cor. 5:5). How does this language make any sense?

Paul's statement makes sense only against the background of the cosmic-geographical worldview of the Old Testament. In Old Testament theology, Yahweh's "portion" was Israel and the land he was giving the Israelites, the land of Canaan. His presence sanctified the ground—made it holy. Initially, the presence of Yahweh resided in the tabernacle. When the Israelites rested and set up camp, the ark of the covenant was placed in the center, marking Israel's camp as holy ground. Later, after Israel took up residence in Canaan, Yahweh's presence was in the temple, sanctifying the Promised Land as holy ground—Yahweh and his people were at home. Now, the presence of Yahweh indwells believers—we are the temple of God (1 Cor. 6:19; 2 Cor. 6:16; Rom. 8:9). That means believers, the body of Christ, are the new people of God, a new Israel. Paul makes that explicitly clear in Galatians 3:

> The real children of Abraham, then, are those who put their faith in God.…
>
> For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes. There is no longer Jew or Gentile, slave or free, male and female. For you are all one in Christ Jesus. And now that you belong to Christ, you are the true children of Abraham. You are his heirs, and God's promise to Abraham belongs to you. (Gal. 3:7, 26–29 NLT)

Since believers—and the places where believers are gathered—are holy ground, sin must be expelled. Just as the ground around the Israelite camp

and the surrounding nations under the dominion of other gods were conceived as unholy ground, so in New Testament times—and now—the world was unholy ground. Hence Paul's command to expel an unrepentant believer back into the world, the domain of Satan. To be expelled from the church was to be put back into unholy territory. That was where sin belonged.

Why This Matters

The cosmic geography that is the result of God's judgment of the nations at Babel is the backdrop for Israel's struggle. It also sets the stage for the gospel. The good news of Jesus' work on the cross is that the people of God are no longer only Jews but rather all who believe in Jesus (Gal. 3). As the disciples go out into the world, the domain of Satan is transformed into God's territory. The kingdom of God advances, regaining control of the nations.

The lesson is that *this* world is not our home. Darkness has permeated the globe. Unbelievers are essentially hostages of spiritual forces. They need the gospel to be set free. And don't forget: It is the *gospel* that is our weapon. We aren't authorized to confront principalities and powers directly. There's no spiritual gift to that effect handed down to us by the apostles. But the faithful dispensing of the gospel will turn the tide. The Great Commission is a spiritual battle plan. We'll learn more about that in chapters to come.

Another lesson: We need to view every congregation of true believers as holy ground. External appearances, buildings, and the size of the congregation are of no concern to God. What matters is that, where two or three are gathered, Jesus is in their midst (Matt. 18:20). The space is sacred. Every congregation, no matter how small or unknown, is on the front lines of a spiritual war. Every church has the same task. The powers of darkness will not prevail.

We'll revisit the idea of cosmic geography when we get to Jesus' ministry. For now, the battle lines have been drawn. The nations of the world have been judged and disinherited by God. It's time for him to start over and carve out his own portion and people.

CHAPTER **SIX**

The Word, the Name, and the Angel

In the last chapter we learned about the cosmic geography of the Bible. In response to human rebellion at the Tower of Babel, God forsook the nations. He assigned them to members of his heavenly council, the sons of God (Deut. 32:8–9). To replace the now-forsaken nations, he would create a new people, a nation of his own. They would be his agents to renew his kingdom on earth. But that task would prove to be an awful struggle, as the other gods and the people of their domains would become fierce enemies of Israel and God.

God's new people would begin with a man named Abram, whose name he would later change to Abraham. Soon after the judgment at Babel, God paid him a visit.

Abraham Meets the Word

Most Christians are familiar with God's visit to Abraham in Genesis 12. God tells Abraham to leave his home and go to a place he's never seen. God promises to guide him. He tells Abraham he will be his God and gives him special covenant promises. He'll enable Abraham and Sarah to have a son, though they are both elderly. From that son will come multitudes of people —people who will form the new earthly family of God. Through them the nations will be blessed.

We tend to think Abraham's encounters with God were a voice from heaven or in Abraham's head. Or perhaps God came in a dream. The Bible is clear that God did that sort of thing with the prophets and other people. But that isn't what happened with Abraham. God did something more dramatic. He came as a man. He and Abraham talked face-to-face.

We get a hint of this in Genesis 12:6–7. The Bible says God *appeared* to Abraham. Three chapters later, God appears again (Gen. 15:1–6). This time God comes to Abraham as "the word of the Lord" in a *vision.* This wasn't a voice in the head, since the "word" brought Abraham outside and showed him the stars to make the point that his offspring would be uncountable (Gen. 15:5).

God appeared to Abraham as a man on other occasions (Gen. 18). He did the same to Isaac (Gen. 26:1–5), the son God had promised, and Jacob, the son of Isaac (Gen. 28:10–22; 31:11–12; 32:24–30).

The "word" or voice of God as a way of expressing God in human form shows up in unexpected places. One of my favorite instances is found in 1 Samuel 3. The boy Samuel kept hearing a voice calling him at night while he was trying to sleep. Eventually Eli, the priest with whom Samuel lived and for whom he worked, figured out it was God. In verse 10, God came back to Samuel: "The LORD came and stood there, and called out as he had before, 'Samuel! Samuel!' " (GNT). We know this was God in human form because the description has him standing, and because the end of the chapter (1 Sam. 3:19) says "the word of the LORD" made a habit of appearing to Samuel.

Another prophet to whom the "word of the LORD" came in physical human form was Jeremiah. In Jeremiah 1, where he is called to be a prophet, Jeremiah says the "word" came to him. Jeremiah identified the "word" as God himself. The Lord touched him *with his hand* (Jer. 1:1–9).

God in Human Form

God appearing as a man is actually a pattern in the Old Testament, long before his arrival as Jesus of Nazareth. When you think about it, it makes sense. God is utterly unlike us. The Bible hints that no human can see the true essence of God, the true glory-presence, and live. When Bible characters physically encountered God they expected to die (Gen. 32:30; Deut. 5:24; Judg. 6:22–24). They didn't, because God filtered his presence through something the human mind could process—a fire, a cloud, and more often than many Christians realize, a man.

In many instances, God's appearance in human form is described as an encounter with "the Angel of the LORD." This Angel is a familiar character. For example, he appears to Moses in the burning bush (Ex. 3:1–3). The God in the bush promised to use Moses to lead his people out of Egypt. God had appeared to Jacob visibly in a dream at Bethel (Gen. 28:10–22), where he was identified as the Lord (Yahweh). Later the Angel of God came to Jacob in another dream and told him point-blank that he was the same God who met him at Bethel earlier (Gen. 31:11–12).

Many Bible teachers hesitate to identify this Angel as God himself. But there are several secure indications that he is. Perhaps the most important happens shortly after God gives the Law to Moses. As the Israelites prepare to journey on to the Promised Land, God tells Moses:

> Behold, I send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. Pay careful attention to him and obey his voice; do not rebel against him, for he will not pardon your transgression, for my name is in him.
>
> But if you carefully obey his voice and do all that I say, then I will be an enemy to your enemies and an adversary to your adversaries. (Ex. 23:20–22)

This is no normal angel. This Angel can forgive sins (or not). This Angel has the name of God in him. That expression is odd but significant. The "name" was an Old Testament way of referring to God himself, God's very presence or essence. For example, Isaiah 30:27–28 casts the name of the Lord as a person—as God himself:

> Behold, the name of the LORD comes from afar,
> burning with his anger, and in thick rising smoke;
> his lips are full of fury,
> and his tongue is like a devouring fire;
> his breath is like an overflowing stream.

Even today observant Jews refer to God by saying *ha-shem* ("the name").

Another way of knowing this Angel was God in human form is to compare Exodus 23:20–22 with other passages. The Angel who had met Moses in the burning bush, the Angel with God's name inside him, did indeed bring the Israelites out of Egypt and into the Promised Land (Judg. 2:1–3). But so did the Lord (Josh. 24:17–18) and God's own presence (Deut. 4:37–38). The Lord, the presence, and the Angel of the Lord are different ways of pointing to the same figure: God. But the Angel is human in form.

One of the passages in the Bible that makes this point most compellingly is also very obscure. Few people ever notice it. It's a deathbed scene. Before he dies, Jacob wants to bless Joseph's children. In his blessing he recollects episodes in his life—some of his encounters with God. He begins his blessing this way (Gen. 48:15–16):

> The God before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac walked,
> the God who has been my shepherd all my life long to this day,
> the angel who has redeemed me from all evil …

Then, incredibly, in verse 16 he prays, "May *he* bless these boys" (NIV, emphasis added). He doesn't say, "May *they* bless these boys," as though speaking of two different persons, God and the Angel. He fuses them together in the prayer: may *he* bless these boys.

Even more mind-bending is Judges 6, the call of Gideon. There *both* the Lord and the Angel of the Lord are found *in the same scene* (Judg. 6:22–23). Even in the Old Testament, God was more than one person, and one of those persons came as a man.

Jesus: the Word, the Name, and the Angel

The descriptions of God we've covered up to this point should sound familiar—they're all Old Testament versions of how the New Testament talks about Jesus.

Abraham met the word, God in human form. In John 1:1, the apostle writes: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." In verse 14, John says this Word "became flesh and

dwelt among us." When a first-century Jew read the gospel of John, his or her mind would be taken back to God himself, coming as the Word. In fact, Jesus even claimed that Abraham had "seen his day," and that he had been around before Abraham (John 8:56–58).

Moses met the Angel of the Lord, God in human form, in the burning bush and afterward. The Angel brought Israel out of Egypt into the Promised Land. But Jude wrote in his short letter, "Now I want to remind you, although you once fully knew it, that Jesus, who saved a people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe" (1:5). The Angel was God in human form. The Angel was the second person of the Trinity—who would later be born to the Virgin Mary.

The presence of God, the name, made this Angel distinct from all others. At times, in the New Testament, Jesus talks about God the Father as the name. In his prayer in the garden of Gethsemane, just before being captured for the trial that would lead to his crucifixion, Jesus prayed: "Father, glorify me in your own presence with the glory that I had with you before the world existed. I have manifested your name to the people whom you gave me out of the world.… I made known to them your name" (John 17:5–6, 26). What did he mean in that last statement? Jesus wasn't saying he let people know what God's name was. They were Jews. They knew what God's name was—it was Yahweh. They had the Old Testament. They could look up God's name in thousands of verses. When Jesus said he had manifested God's name to the people, he meant he had manifested *God himself* to the people. He was God before their very eyes. *He was the name made flesh*.

Why This Matters

We've come far enough in our study to get the biblical lay of the land. All the Bible stories you know take place within the context of the overarching spiritual conflict in the unseen world. It's a winner-take-all clash of the gods.

In the biblical view of the unseen world, God has serious enemies, other gods he created who were once loyal to him but who went their own way. These rebel gods are the ones Paul describes as dark powers, the rulers,

authorities, and thrones of the unseen world (Eph. 6:11; Col. 1:16). They're still here. Nothing in the New Testament tells us they went away. They live to oppose God's rule—and to deprive him of everlasting reunion with his beloved human family through the gospel.

One of these dark powers is the lord of the dead. He has rightful claim to humanity, since his deception of Adam and Eve resulted in the loss of immortality. And that was his goal—the extermination of Yahweh's people. It's what the spawn of the rival sons of God had in mind when the Israelites entered Canaan: kill or be killed to prevent God's people from possessing the land. Once Israel entered the land, the dark powers' goal remained the same, but their strategy changed: seduce God's people into worshipping other gods, and then Yahweh will get rid of them for us. And that's what happened. God sent his people into exile.

But the powers of darkness knew something else: Yahweh wouldn't give up on his plan. The curse on the original rebel foretold that, one day, a descendant of Eve, who would undo the effects of human failure in Eden, would come. They knew that at some point the Promised One would appear—although, as Paul told us, they didn't know precisely what God was planning (1 Cor. 2:6–8; Eph. 3:10; 6:12). That's because it was a mystery, intentionally hidden from all by the Most High.

CHAPTER **SEVEN**

Rules of Engagement

Our story so far: God cast aside the nations and their peoples at Babel. The lesser gods assigned to them took dominion (Deut. 32:8–9). When God started over with Abraham, it was clear that he planned to one day reclaim the nations through the influence of Israel (Gen. 12:3). But the gods of the nations would have to be forced to surrender their power and worship (Ps. 82:6–8). That meant conflict—in both the seen and unseen realms. As soon as there was an Israel, she was in the crosshairs of the gods.

Who Is Yahweh?

It doesn't take long in the biblical story for Israel to wind up in a precarious position. The story of Joseph (Gen. 37–50) explains why Israel went to Egypt. God's providence turned the harm intended Joseph by his brothers to the salvation of Israel from famine (Gen. 46:3–4; 50:20). That God didn't tell Israel to leave Egypt right away was also intentional. God knew the pharaoh who honored Joseph would die and be replaced by an enemy (Ex. 1). He had foreseen that Egypt would put the Israelites into forced labor (Gen. 15:13–16). He also knew he would rescue Israel when the time was right (Gen. 46:4).

But why wait? God always has a good reason for suffering. We just can't always see it. In this case, though, Scripture makes it clear.

After Moses had fled Egypt and taken up residence in the wilderness, God called him at the burning bush (Ex. 3:1–14) to send him back to Egypt. His orders were simple: Tell Pharaoh "Let my people go" (Ex. 5:1). Pharaoh had other ideas. He was god in the flesh in Egypt, the emblem of all its glory and power. He wasn't going to let some invisible God of

Hebrew shepherds tell him what to do. He didn't even know whether the God of Moses was real. He mockingly replied, "Who is the LORD, that I should obey his voice and let Israel go?" (Ex. 5:2).

He was about to get an answer—one that would hurt. God had set him up. God had told Moses, "I will harden his heart, so that he will not let the people go" (Ex. 4:21). God had a fight to pick. After they had oppressed the Israelites for centuries, it was time for Egypt and its gods to be punished. Pharaoh's hardening was part of that plot. The Bible tells us the plagues were aimed at Egypt's gods—especially the last one, the death of the firstborn (Ex. 12:12; Num. 33:4), which turned out to be a direct assault on Pharaoh's house: "At midnight the LORD struck down all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh who sat on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who was in the dungeon, and all the firstborn of the livestock" (Ex. 12:29).

Pharaoh had mocked God, and the tables had been drastically turned. As Paul would later put it, "Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap" (Gal. 6:7). The pounding Egypt took on the way to the Israelites' release from Egypt had the desired effect. People as far away as Canaan heard about the thrashing Israel's God had given Egypt and its gods (Josh. 2:8–10; compare to Ex. 15:16–18; Josh. 9:9). Jethro, Moses' Midianite father-in-law, summed up the lesson when Moses finally returned: "Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all the gods" (Ex. 18:11 LEB).

It's no wonder then that Moses, on the other side of the Red Sea, asked his own rhetorical question, mocking Pharaoh and his lost army: *Who is like the Lord among the gods*? (Ex. 15:11).

Once out of Egypt and through the Red Sea, the Israelites knew where they were headed. They were going to meet their God at his latest earthly home and headquarters, Mount Sinai.

In truth, the Israelites didn't know much about God. There was no Bible *at all* in the days of the exodus. The only knowledge the Israelites had about God they had gained through stories they'd heard from their parents, passed down from generation to generation. Reading the story now in the Bible, we

can clearly see what God was up to. The Israelites had a lot to learn. Sinai was the classroom.

Israel—God's Family and Earthly Representatives

When Moses had stood before Pharaoh, before the exodus, he told him God had a message: "Israel is my son, my firstborn … release my son and let him serve me" (Ex. 4:22–23 LEB). That idea of God having a son—in this case, referring to all of Abraham's descendants—is important. It takes us back to God's creation of Adam and Eve.

God wanted a human family. He wanted to live on his creation, earth, with the people he had made. He wanted his unseen family and his human family to live with him and serve him. He wanted people to multiply and for all the earth to become like Eden. But when God forsook humanity at the Tower of Babel, he had no children—until he called Abraham. Israel was God's new family. It was time to get back to the original plan. As Adam and Eve had been God's earthly imagers, Israel would now fill that role.

Going back to Sinai was a homecoming. Even the heavenly council was there, watching as God's plan was put back into motion. They were witnesses to a new covenant between God and his people—the Law.

The Law of God—Delivered by God's Council

Did it surprise you when I said the heavenly council was present at Sinai when God delivered the Ten Commandments? If you've ever seen a movie about the exodus and the trip to Sinai, you didn't see angels. But the Bible says they were there. It even says they delivered God's law (Acts 7:52–53; Heb. 2:1–2).

It also says the Law was written "with the finger of God" (Deut. 9:9–10). That language should be familiar—God in human form. God was on Sinai, appearing as a man, just like the stories in Genesis about the Angel of the Lord. He and his heavenly host gave the Law to Moses and to Israel.

After the giving of the Law, Moses, Aaron, Aaron's sons, and seventy of Israel's elders got to see the God of Israel in human form again. This time they met for a meal (Ex. 24:9–11). Just as the Last Supper in Jesus' time sealed the new covenant of his blood, this meal celebrated God's new covenant with Israel on Sinai—the Law.

God gave Israel the Law so they would be holy (Lev. 19:2). He wanted Israel to be set apart from other people, distinguishable to everyone as his own family. As God is completely distinct from all other gods and everything earthly, so God's people needed to be distinct from other people.

What did holiness mean? What was the concept behind it? Holiness did not mean being odd. Holiness was to be identified with the Lord, to be dedicated to God and to enjoy all the good things in life that come with being right with God. God wanted Israel to attract the other nations to come back to him (Deut. 4:6–8; 28:9–10). This is why the Bible calls Israel a "kingdom of priests" (Ex. 19:6) and "a light for the nations" (Isa. 42:6; 49:6; see also 51:4; 60:3). The entire nation inherited the position of Abraham to be a blessing to all the nations (Gen. 12:3).

Believing Loyalty

Being right with God is another way of talking about salvation. But despite what we've often been taught in Sunday school, salvation didn't come to Israelites by obeying rules, by following the Law. Whether in the Old Testament or the New, salvation is never earned, or even deserved. It's *given* by the grace of God in response to faith.

Israelites too, just like those of us born after Christ's death and resurrection, had to have faith. They had to *believe* their God was the God of all gods, trusting that he had made them his people. They alone had access to the God of gods. The Law was not how Israelites achieved salvation—it was how they showed loyalty to the God they believed in. Salvation for an Israelite was about faith in the promises and character of the God of gods and about refusing to worship another god. It was about *belief* and *loyalty* from the heart, not earning brownie points with God.

King David did awful things like commit adultery and arrange a murder (2 Sam. 11). According to the Law, he was a lawbreaker and deserved to die for his crimes. Even so, he never wavered in his belief in Yahweh as the Most High God. He never switched his loyalty to another god. And God was merciful to him.

The same is true in the New Testament. Believing the gospel means believing that the God of Israel came to earth as a man, voluntarily died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins, and rose again on the third day. We must embrace that by faith and then show our loyalty to Jesus by forsaking all other gods. Regardless of what those other gods may say about salvation, the Bible tells us there is no salvation in any other name than Jesus (Acts 4:12) and that faith must remain intact (Rom. 11:17–24; Heb. 3:19; 10:22, 38–39). Personal failure is not the same as trading Jesus for another god—and God can tell the difference.

Why This Matters

There's a lot of fascinating symbolism in the exodus and what happened at Sinai. The scene where Moses and others have a meal with God in human form on Sinai catches our attention right away. There are seventy elders with Moses. If you count the nations in Genesis 10 that God cast aside after the Tower of Babel incident, you get seventy. Those nations were assigned to the sons of God—other lesser gods—when the God of Israel judged the nations (Deut. 4:19–20; 32:8–9). Why seventy elders, seventy sons of God, and seventy disinherited nations?

The correspondences are deliberate. When Jesus started off his earthly ministry, he sent out seventy disciples (Luke 10:1). This was a precursor to the Great Commission. The number telegraphed the idea that the disciples of Jesus would reclaim the nations for the kingdom rule of God. That kingdom would reach its final form at the end of days in the new global Eden of Revelation 21–22. The repetition of the number seventy is a message: God's new earthly family, Israel—the children of Abraham—would be the means to recover what was lost.

But it doesn't stop there. The apostle Paul wrote in Galatians 3 that believers have inherited the promises given to Abraham. Everyone who

believes in Jesus is a child of Abraham through faith (Gal. 3:26–29). That means you and I are tasked with taking back the nations from the gods. It is our task to turn people under the spiritual dominion of other gods to faith in Jesus. We are God's new human council on earth. And when we are glorified, we will join his divine family in the new Eden.

The Bible conveys these ideas in many places. The book of Revelation describes believers inheriting the rule of the nations with Jesus at the end of days (Rev. 3:21). That means we will displace the sons of God who have dominated those nations since Babel. This is why John says believers have the authority to be the children of God (John 1:12; compare to 1 John 3:1–3); we will in fact displace the divine-but-hostile sons of God in the last days.

This is also why Paul, when writing to believers to stop letting the world's courts resolve their disputes, says, "Do you not know that we are to judge angels?" (1 Cor. 6:3). When we are made divine (glorified) on the new earth, *we will outrank angels*. We will one day be made like Jesus (1 John 3:1–3; 1 Cor. 15:35–49) and rule with him over the nations (Rev. 2:26) now controlled by hostile gods. Believers, the spiritual offspring of Abraham, will ultimately reverse the disinheritance of the nations along with the curse of death that extended from Eden's failure.

We ought to live as if we believe this destiny. Everything in the Old Testament plan leads to us. Think back to Eden. God wanted his two families—one divine, the other human—to live and rule together in Eden. That plan was ruined by rebellion, but revived by the rescue of Israel from Egypt. Out of Abraham's children would come the messiah, who would undo the failure in Eden (Gen. 3:15). Without an Israel, we would have no destiny.

And that's precisely why the gods and their followers would try again to erase Israel.

CHAPTER **EIGHT**

Sacred Space

The Israelites spent over a year at Mount Sinai. Why so long? They had already entered into a covenant with God and received the Ten Commandments. But they still had a lot to learn. It was one thing to promise to believe in and be loyal to the God of their ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It was another to know what God expected and what he was like.

The Concept of Holiness

Many of the strange laws and practices of the Old Testament are grounded in the need to teach people that God is *unlike* everything else. In his nature and character, he is unique; he is completely *other* than humanity and anything else. For Israel, that was a truth that had to be reinforced at all times. Otherwise, God might be thought of as ordinary.

The biblical word for the idea of God's unique otherness is *holiness*. It means "to be set apart" or "to be distinct." The concept isn't necessarily about moral conduct—about the idea that we should behave a certain way to reflect God's distinct moral standards—though that is included (Lev. 19:2).

God wasn't content to simply give Israelites an intellectual explanation of holiness. He wanted the concept of his otherness to permeate life in ancient Israel. The Bible tells us this was accomplished through rituals (symbolic acts) and by rules for approaching sacred areas.

How Is God "Other"?

The short answer to this question is "in every way," but that's too abstract. The Bible is much more down-to-earth, and the rituals and rules for Israelite community living reflect that.

For example, the Bible teaches us that God was not only the source of Israel's life—he *was* life. God is not of this earth, a place where there is death, disease, and imperfection. His realm is supernatural. Our realm is terrestrial. The earthly space he occupies is made sacred and *otherworldly* by his presence. The space we occupy is ordinary. God is the polar opposite of ordinary.

In ancient Israel, these ideas were conveyed by the fact that people had to be invited and purified to occupy the same space as God. Many laws in the Old Testament regulate this purifying.

Israelites could be disqualified (made "unclean") from sacred space by a variety of activities and conditions. Having sex, losing blood, certain physical handicaps, and touching a dead body (human or animal) all rendered an Israelite unclean. Israelites were forbidden from eating certain birds of prey that ate from dead animals (e.g., vultures, hawks; Lev. 11:13–19) or animals that might be found on or inside a carcass (e.g., lizards, mice; Lev. 11:24–40).

In these instances, uncleanness was not about morality but rather about association with loss of life and the incompatibility of that with God's perfection. Even though the logic is simple, it feels foreign to our modern minds. Loss of blood and sexual fluids were perceived as the loss of that which created and sustained life. God was not to be associated with the *loss* of life but rather with being the *giver* of life. Requiring "purification" after the loss of such fluids was a reminder of God's nature. Similar "purification" was required after being made unclean by contact with the dead. One could also be excluded from sacred areas in Israel due to physical imperfection or injury, in this case because such imperfection is incompatible with God's perfection.

All these laws were intended to drive home a supernatural worldview.

Fixing the Problem of Uncleanness

Being "unclean" and unfit to approach sacred space was a serious matter for ancient Israelites. They could not bring sacrifices and offerings to the required locations if they were unclean. The solution was ritual purification, sometimes involving its own sacrifice or a waiting period.

The logic of blood sacrifice—the dabbing or sprinkling of blood on a person or object to render them clean and fit to occupy sacred space—is foreign to us. But blood sacrifices had a theological purpose—they introduced the concept of substitution. Since blood was the life force (Lev. 17:11), the taking of an animal life taught the lesson that approaching God on any terms except his own meant death. The blood of the sacrifice was a merciful substitute to rectify an Israelite's defiled, unclean state.

The teaching point was that God was *preserving* an Israelite's life by substituting the sacrifice. Human life was more sacred than animal life because humans were created in God's image (Gen. 1:26; 9:6). Israelites owed their existence by a supernatural intervention that enabled Abraham and Sarah to have a child (Gen. 12:1–3). But human life was in peril in the presence of a holy God. Sacrifices reminded them that God had power over life and death—and God wanted to show them mercy.

Heaven (and Hell) on Earth

Drawing attention to God's otherness communicated certain ideas—not only about God, but also about supernatural boundaries. The idea of "realm distinction" was fundamental to the supernatural worldview of Israel. If where God's presence dwelt was holy, the ground elsewhere was not—it was either ordinary or, in some cases, hostile and evil.

God's own presence was marked by reminders of Eden. Many features of the tabernacle and the temple were designed to make people think of Eden, the place where heaven and earth met. The golden lampstand was fashioned and decorated as a tree (Ex. 25:31–40), an analogy to the Tree of Life in Eden. It stood guard in front of the veil that blocked the way to the Holy of Holies, the place where the ark of the covenant was stationed, the lid designed to function as a throne for God (Ex. 25:10–22).

The cherubim inside the Holy of Holies are also a clear connection to Eden. The Edenic cherubim stood guard at the dwelling place of God in Eden (Gen. 3:24). The cherubim inside the Holy of Holies guarded the lid to the ark of the covenant (Ex. 25:18–20). Later, after Solomon built the temple, the tent structure of the tabernacle was moved inside the temple and two giant cherubim were installed over the ark as a throne for God, making the ark his footstool (1 Chron. 28:2).

The temple was also decorated like the garden of Eden, filled with images of lush vegetation and animals (1 Kings 6–7). Flowers, palm trees, lions, and pomegranates were carved into its architecture. It was a visual reminder of the place where God had first come to earth to live with his human family.

Israelites needed to be reminded of the dark side of cosmic geography too. If the Israelite camp, and later the nation of Israel, was holy ground, the home of God and his people, then the terrain outside Israel was *unholy* ground. God had, long before Sinai, forsaken the other nations and given them over to lesser gods (Deut. 4:19–20; 32:8–9). He would one day reclaim the nations, but during biblical days, they were realms of darkness.

One Israelite ritual brought this lesson home in unforgettable detail. The Day of Atonement (Yom Kippur), held every year and described in Leviticus 16, included a fascinating object lesson to remind people about holy and unholy ground.

Two goats were involved. One was sacrificed and its blood sprinkled in the sanctuary to cleanse it of human defilement for another year. The sacrificed goat was "for the LORD." The other goat wasn't killed—it was sent out into the wilderness after the high priest symbolically transferred the sins of the people onto it. That goat was "for Azazel."

Who or what is "Azazel"? Some translations render the word *scapegoat* instead of Azazel. In the Dead Sea Scrolls, the Hebrew word in question is a proper name—the name of a demon. During the wilderness journey to the Promised Land, the Israelites had been sacrificing to demons (Lev. 17:7), because they feared evil forces would threaten their camp. The wilderness was, after all, outside the Israelite camp, and therefore it was the place of evil entities. This practice had to stop, and the goat for Azazel accomplished

that. The goat for Azazel wasn't an offering to evil gods—the goat was never sacrificed. Instead, sending it into the wilderness was a symbolic way of cleansing holy ground (the Israelite camp) from sin.

Why This Matters

Things changed in the New Testament, but also stayed the same. God is still *other*. His holiness requires that we be purified to enter his presence. For us, that's accomplished by believing in what Jesus did on the cross.

Everything Jesus did on our behalf had supernatural overtones. He went out into the wilderness—the place we would expect to find the forces of evil—and overcame Satan's temptation. That event was followed by the beginning of his ministry, which culminated in overcoming the Devil, who "has the power of death" (Heb. 2:14). Jesus was crucified *outside* the holy city (Heb. 13:12). He was unclean because our sins were upon him, and Jerusalem was holy ground.

Jesus' death and resurrection sanctify us—make us fit for God's presence. Our sins were "taken away" (Rom. 11:27; see also 1 John 3:5). Though unclean sinners, we are holy if we are in Christ. Though imperfect, our imperfections are overlooked because of Jesus. It's that simple, yet that profound.

We tend to think Israelites were in many ways more spiritually privileged than we are. After all, they had God's presence right in their midst. They lived in a world where supernatural, cosmic geography was *real*. We tend to think we would be more spiritual, more tuned-in to God, if only we had what they had, if only those continual reminders of God were our reality.

The New Testament says *they are*.

We don't need a tabernacle or temple to mark sacred space. Our bodies *are* sacred space. Paul calls our earthly bodies a "tent" (2 Cor. 5:4) because we are indwelt by the same divine presence that filled the Holy of Holies in the tabernacle and the temple (Rom. 8:9–11). Eventually our body, the earthly home of our spirit, will die, only to be replaced by a "house not

made with hands" (2 Cor. 5:1–3), a heavenly dwelling—the new Eden, heaven returned to earth (Rev. 22:1–3).

Since God indwells believers today through his Spirit, each church—each gathering of believers—is holy ground. This is why Paul, when sadly telling the Corinthians to expel an unrepentant Christian who was living in sin, instructed them to "deliver this man to Satan" (1 Cor. 5:5). The church was holy ground. Outside the fellowship of believers was the domain of Satan. That was where sin and its self-destruction belonged.

It's time we looked at ourselves through supernatural eyes. You are a child of God, fit for sacred space, not because of what you do or don't do, but because you are in Christ, adopted by God (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5). You've been extracted from the realm of darkness and "transferred … to the kingdom of his beloved Son" (Col. 1:13).

We must never, not for a moment, forget who we are in Christ—and what that means to the world.

CHAPTER **NINE**

Holy War

The Bible is a controversial book. People who don't see it as the Word of God often object to what it says. But some parts of the Bible make even Christians uncomfortable. Israel's war to conquer the Promised Land is a case in point.

Why? Mostly because of the killing. It seems indiscriminate and far too thorough. Why was it necessary to kill entire populations in some cities—men, women, children, and even livestock? Why not let the inhabitants surrender? Wouldn't it be better to exile them than to slaughter them?

There's an answer to those objections—but I've discovered that the answer seems to make Christians as uncomfortable as the problem. You can only understand the rationale and motive of the conquest accounts when you see them through the supernatural worldview of an Israelite.

Israel's Supernatural Logic

The battles for the Promised Land were framed by two factors, both deeply rooted in Israel's understanding of their world as not only the abode of humankind but also the prize in an unseen spiritual war. We've talked about both of them already, but let's review.

One factor is the fallout from the events at the Tower of Babel, when God decided, after the nations rebelled against him, that he no longer wanted a direct relationship with the people of those nations. Instead, he assigned members of his divine council, the sons of God, to govern them (Deut. 4:19–20; 32:8–9). Afterward, he called Abraham and enabled him and his wife Sarah to have a child (Isaac), from whom the people of Israel would come.

We learned in Psalm 82 that these lesser gods became corrupt. They allowed injustice. People came to worship them instead of the Most High God. Thus, they became enemies of God and his people, Israel. Since some of those nations were within the land of Canaan, which God purposed to give to his nation Israel after the exodus, Moses and the Israelites believed the people who occupied those lands were their mortal enemies and their gods would do all they could to destroy Israel.

The second factor was even more frightening for the Israelites. It's best explained by what happened when the Israelites arrived at the border of Canaan, the Promised Land.

Moses sent twelve spies into Canaan to report on the land and its inhabitants. The spies came back with evidence that the land itself was wonderful—it flows "with milk and honey"—just as God had told them (Num. 13:27). But then they dropped a bombshell: "The land, through which we have gone to spy it out, is a land that devours its inhabitants, and all the people that we saw in it are of great height. And there we saw the Nephilim (the sons of Anak, who come from the Nephilim), and we seemed to ourselves like grasshoppers, and so we seemed to them" (Num. 13:32–33).

We've talked about the Nephilim before. They were the sinister spawn of the sons of God and the daughters of humankind back in Genesis 6:1–4. The Anakim giants the Israelite spies saw in Canaan were their descendants, and there were more of them scattered throughout the land of Canaan, among the nations and cities the Israelites would have to defeat to take the land (Num. 13:28–29). The task of conquering the land and its gods had seemed difficult before; now it looked downright impossible. Now to take the land they would have to face warriors of abnormal physical size.

Only two of the spies—Joshua and Caleb—believed God would help the Israelites defeat the Anakim. The rest persuaded the people they would lose. Instead of trusting that God—the same God who had devastated Pharaoh and his army so thoroughly—would intercede to give them the victory, they whined, "We are not able to go up against the people, for they are stronger than we are" (Num. 13:31).

God replied, “How long will this people despise me? And how long will they not believe in me, in spite of all the signs that I have done among them?” (Num. 14:11). In fact, God was so angry that he threatened to disinherit Israel—the very thing he had done to the nations back at the Tower of Babel—and start over yet again, this time with Moses: “I will strike them with the pestilence and disinherit them, and I will make of you a nation greater and mightier than they” (Num. 14:12).

Moses begged God to relent (Num. 14:13–19). God did, but he couldn’t overlook the unbelief of the people. A lesson had to be learned. It would be harsh. He told Moses:

> I have pardoned, according to your word. But truly, as I live, and as all the earth shall be filled with the glory of the LORD, none of the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the wilderness, and yet have put me to the test these ten times and have not obeyed my voice, shall see the land that I swore to give to their fathers. And none of those who despised me shall see it.…
>
> Your dead bodies shall fall in this wilderness, and of all your number, listed in the census from twenty years old and upward, who have grumbled against me, not one shall come into the land where I swore that I would make you dwell, except Caleb the son of Jephunneh and Joshua the son of Nun. But your little ones, who you said would become a prey, I will bring in, and they shall know the land that you have rejected. (Num. 14:20–31)

“Ten times” was a figure of speech in biblical days for “time and time again” (Gen. 31:7; Job 19:3). To this point, God had been tolerant of the people’s complaints. Instead of being thrilled to no longer be bondservants in Egypt, they’d griped about the food they had to eat (Num. 11:1–14; 31–35) and about God’s chosen leader, Moses (Num. 12:1–16). But his patience had run out; this time, their unbelief would have a terrible cost. Israel would wander in the desert for forty years until all the adults who had not believed had died off.

A Second Chance

Israel would get a second chance at taking the Promised Land. Deuteronomy 2–3 chronicles how, during their forty years of wandering, the Israelites wound up in the territory on the other side of the Jordan River (called the "Transjordan"), to the east of the Promised Land. The Transjordanian lands were Edom, Moab, and Ammon, territories God had given to the descendants of Lot, Abraham's nephew, and Esau, Jacob's brother. The people who lived there were relatives of the Israelites … most of them, anyway. But there were others.

God had directed Moses to make this trip for a specific purpose. It wasn't about visiting distant relatives. The Israelites eventually made their way into a region known as Bashan. The place had a terrifying reputation. In ancient literature outside the Bible, Bashan was known as "the place of the serpent." Two of its major cities, Ashtaroth and Edrei, both mentioned in connection with this journey (Deut. 1:4; Josh. 13:12), were considered gateways to the underworld realm of the dead. In the context of Israel's supernatural worldview, God had led the Israelites to the gates of hell.

And that wasn't all.

God had brought the Israelites there to encounter two kings, Sihon and Og. Those two kings were Amorites (Deut. 3:2–3; 31:4) and rulers of what the Bible calls the Rephaim. As Deuteronomy 2:11 ominously noted, the Anakim were "also counted as Rephaim." God, through Moses, had led the people to another area occupied by the same sort of giants that had frightened the Israelite spies into unbelief years earlier (Num. 13:32–33), the event that had caused the forty years of wandering.

Why had God brought them there? Because this confrontation was a foretaste of what would have to be done when the forty years had ended. Israel would eventually have to cross the Jordan to occupy the land God had given to them. God was testing his people. Would they believe and fight this time? If so, a victory would give them confidence and faith for what lay ahead.

The Israelites had turned tail years earlier. But this time the story ended differently. As Moses said, "The LORD our God gave [Sihon] over to us, and we defeated him and his sons and all his people.… The LORD our God gave into our hand Og also, the king of Bashan, and all his people, and we struck

him down until he had no survivor left" (Deut. 2:33; 3:3). The prophet Amos, recounting the confrontation in his own biblical book many years later, described the outcome this way: "[the Lord] destroyed the Amorite before them, whose height was like the height of the cedars and who was as strong as the oaks" (Amos 2:9).

It was a rough way to start their second chance. God demanded that they face their fears—the terrors that had cost them forty years of aimless wandering. They had the God who had parted the Red Sea on their side. It was time they remembered that.

"Devoted to Destruction"

Israel won the day against Sihon and Og. And it is here that we get our first taste of why the conquest of the Promised Land at times involved annihilation. The entire populations of the cities that were home to the giant Rephaim were "devoted to destruction" (Deut. 3:6). The goal was not revenge. The goal was to ensure the elimination of the Nephilim bloodlines. To the Israelites, the giant clan bloodlines were demonic, having been produced by rebellious, fallen divine beings. They could not coexist with a demonic heritage.

Time passed, and before the Israelites crossed the Jordan into Canaan, Moses died. The leadership passed to Joshua. He led many military campaigns in the Israelites' conquest of the Promised Land, and those campaigns were guided by the two factors I noted earlier in this chapter: drive out the hostile enemy nations and, in the process, eliminate the giant clan bloodlines.

Viewed in that context, the conquest of the Promised Land was a holy war—a battle against the forces of darkness and enemies under the dominion of hostile gods the Bible says are real spiritual entities.

The logic of the conquest is summarized well in Joshua 11:21–22:

> And Joshua came at that time and cut off the Anakim from the hill country, from Hebron, from Debir, from Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel. Joshua devoted them to destruction with their cities. There was none of the

Anakim left in the land of the people of Israel. Only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod did some remain.

Why This Matters

Joshua's campaigns were mostly successful, but not complete. A few giants escaped—and while that may not have seemed very important, it foreshadowed events to come. Some wound up in Gath. Gath became a Philistine city (Josh. 13:3) and was the hometown of Goliath at the time of King David (1 Sam. 17:4). Goliath wasn't the only giant in Gath, either (1 Chron. 20:5–8). Not all of those who had been "devoted to destruction" during the conquest of the Promised Land were in fact destroyed, and the fact that the conquest didn't accomplish all of its prime directives had consequences for the Israelites.

The book of Judges tells us the conquest was incomplete in other ways at the time Joshua died. It was never fully realized. The Israelites decided they'd done well enough and disobeyed God's command to drive out the other nations. But partial obedience is disobedience.

The Israelites would spend centuries paying for their decision to stop short of God's goals. The book of Judges reiterates an awful cycle: Israel was repeatedly overwhelmed by hostile nations, and believing loyalty to God was nearly extinguished. Things improved by the time of King David and his son, Solomon, but once Solomon was gone, Israel disintegrated into civil war and idolatry.

The glory of the conquest was overshadowed by epic failure. Defeat was snatched from the jaws of victory. God's kingdom rule—his plan for a restored Eden—went down in flames. The supernatural worldview that emerged from Babel, with unbelieving nations under the dominion of evil gods, remained intact. Israel was defeated and scattered, and her Promised Land came under the rule of other gods and their peoples. This same worldview permeates the New Testament too. Paul uses terms like *principalities*, *authorities*, *thrones*, and *powers* to describe the forces of darkness. Each of those terms was used in antiquity to refer to geographical rule.

The cause of the Israelites' failure was disobedience and faithlessness on the part of God's people. Humans are weak. We might wonder why God bothers with us. But if we look back to Eden, we know why. God had committed himself to humanity. We are his imagers, and his earthly family. His original plan for ruling the earth included us. For God to cast aside human participation in his council rule on earth would send the message that he's unable to make it work or that it was a bad idea to begin with. God is not incapable of achieving his own goals. And as mentioned in an earlier chapter, he doesn't make mistakes.

It was time for a new approach to the old problem of sin and failure. Humanity could not be trusted with reviving the Edenic kingdom rule. Only God himself could do what needed to be done. Only God could meet the obligations of his own covenants. But humanity would not be set aside. Instead, *God would have to become man.* God would have to fulfill the Law and the covenants himself and then take upon himself the penalty for all human failure. But pulling off that unthinkable solution meant that it would have to be kept secret from everyone, including the intelligent supernatural beings hostile to his purposes. That wasn't going to be easy.

CHAPTER **TEN**

Hidden in Plain Sight

Since the fall, God had been trying to revive his original goal for Eden: to live with both his divine and human family on earth. God had told Adam and Eve to be fruitful and multiply, thereby spreading God's good rule over the rest of the planet. God wanted the whole earth to be a place where heaven and earth met, where humanity could enjoy the divine, and where the divine could enjoy earth and humanity. We know how *that* went.

A History of Failure

Humanity sinned and was expelled from God's presence. Eden was shut down. The divine enemy, the Serpent, was banished—cast or cut down—from God's presence to earth, the place where death reigns, where life is not everlasting. He became lord of the dead, and therefore had claim to every human being who would ever live—because they sin, and sin's wages is death (Rom. 6:23).

After the flood, God had repeated the goal of Eden to Noah and his family: be fruitful and multiply. It was a do-over. Instead, humanity rebelled. Rather than obey God and spread the knowledge and rule of God everywhere, they would build a tower where God could come to them.

Failure again. God wouldn't go for it. He mixed up the nations' languages and turned the nations over to his divine council to rule. Then he decided to start over with a new human family—through Abraham and Sarah. He would get back to the other nations—through Abraham's descendants—once his kingdom rule was revived (Gen. 12:3).

This, too, was a failure. So was the next attempt, bringing Israel out of Egypt, then to Sinai, and then finally to the Promised Land. Israel failed.

Eventually God raised up David, and then Solomon. But after Solomon died, Israel followed other gods and the Israelites turned on each other. God had to expel them from the Promised Land in exile.

The human story, apart from God's presence, is the story of failure. This is because humanity is lost since the fall. All humans are imperfect and estranged from God. No human leader could be trusted with starting and maintaining God's kingdom. They would resist loyalty to God alone. They would go their own way. Humans would sin, fail, and join the lord of the dead, God's great enemy. But God's vision of sharing the blessing of being steward-kings over a new Eden couldn't happen without humans. And the only way humans would ever be able to hold up their end of God's plan would be for them to be made new again. The curse of the fall must be lifted.

And for that, God had a plan.

The Solution—and a Problem

God needed a man who was more than man—someone who could resist temptation, who would always obey, who was fit for kingship, who could reverse the curse of death by dying and then rising again by his own power. All of that could happen in only one way: God himself would become man. God would fulfill his own plan, *as a man*, for all humankind, and restore Eden. Only when humans were forgiven and made divine like Jesus through resurrection power (1 John 3:1–3) could Eden be a reality.

But there was a problem. If the plan were discovered—that the man who was God was here to die and rise again to ensure that God's original vision would be restored—the forces of darkness wouldn't fall for it.

This is precisely what Paul said in a letter to the Corinthian church:

> But we speak the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery, which God predestined before the ages for our glory, which none of the rulers of this age knew. For if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. (1 Cor. 2:7–8 LEB)

Who is Paul talking about? The word *rulers* can refer to human authorities—such as Pontius Pilate and the Jewish leaders—but Paul also has divine, demonic powers in view (Eph. 2:2). God's enemies, human *and* divine, had to be kept in the dark. Everything depended on the death and resurrection of the God-man.

But how do you keep that a secret?

The Cryptic Messiah

The God-man upon whom the restoration of Eden depended was, of course, the messiah—Jesus of Nazareth. But did it surprise you that I suggested that the messianic plan was secret? Can't we just read the Old Testament and see the whole plan? No, we can't.

Believe it or not, there is no verse in the Old Testament that uses the word *messiah* of a man who was actually God and who would die for the sins of humanity. Not even Isaiah 53:11 with its portrait of a "suffering servant." The word *messiah* never appears in that chapter, and elsewhere in Isaiah, the "servant" refers to the nation of Israel, not an individual savior (Isa. 41:8; 44:1–2, 21; 45:4; 48:20; 49:3). And the word *messiah*, which means "anointed," nearly always refers only to David or one of his descendants who reigned as king after him.

Actually, the proof of what I'm saying—that the profile of a divine messiah who would die and rise again is hard to find in the Old Testament—is apparent in the New Testament.

Think of how the disciples responded to Jesus when he told them he was going to Jerusalem to die. The announcement mystified and distressed them (Matt. 17:22–23; Mark 9:30–32). They didn't respond by saying, "Oh, right, we read that in the Scriptures." Peter even rebuked Jesus for saying it (Matt. 16:21–23).

The disciples had no sense, no inkling, of this new plan of God's. They thought of Jesus only as the son of David and rightful heir to his throne, someone who performed miracles just as the Old Testament prophets did.

Even *after* the resurrection, the disciples had to have their minds *supernaturally* opened to see a suffering messiah. After Jesus had risen

from the dead, he appeared to them and said:

> "These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and Psalms must be fulfilled." Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. (Luke 24:44–45)

The "new plan" of God's—that he would die and then rise from the dead to reverse the curse of the fall—isn't at all evident in the Old Testament. Instead, clues are scattered throughout the Old Testament in dozens of places. Never is it all revealed in one place. The messianic profile is only clear in hindsight—and even then only to someone who already knows what to look for and expect.

Intelligent supernatural evil beings, of course, knew the prophesied son of David had arrived (Matt. 8:28–29; Luke 4:31–35). That much they could grasp from the Old Testament. But nothing the demons ever say creates the impression that they understood Jesus was come to earth to die and rise again, reversing the curse.

As Paul said, had they and Satan understood that, they would never have moved people like Judas to betray Jesus to those who wanted him dead. The Devil and those aligned with him are lots of things, but they aren't morons. They were *duped* into killing Jesus, just as God had planned. They launched the series of events that would lead to their own demise. It was divinely designed misdirection.

Parts of the Profile

In hindsight, we can see the pieces of the messianic profile with more clarity than the disciples could. While there is no verse that describes a divine messianic son of David dying and rising to reverse the curse, those threads run throughout the Old Testament. Having already seen how the plan played out, you can find a thread and start following patterns.

For example, ask, "Who is the son of God?" The answer isn't "Jesus" in the Old Testament. Adam was God's son—he was the first man. Israel is called God's son (Ex. 4:23; Hos. 11:1). The Israelite king is called God's

son (Ps. 2:7). In the New Testament, Jesus is "the second Adam" and the "Son of God" (Rom. 1:4; 1 Cor. 15:45; 2 Cor. 1:19; Heb. 4:4).

We might ask, "Who is God's servant?" Adam served God (Gen. 2:15). Israel was called God's servant (Isa. 41:8; 44:1–2, 21; 45:4; 48:20; 49:3). David and other Israelite kings in his lineage were called God's servant (2 Sam. 3:18; Ps. 89:3; 1 Kings 3:7; 2 Chron. 32:16). Jesus was also the servant (Acts 3:13; 4:30; Phil. 2:1–8).

Did these sons of God and servants of God suffer? Did their earthly existence end at some point? Was that existence renewed? Do they have a future in a new Eden? The answers are all yes. Adam, Israel, and the Davidic kings were all exiled from God's presence—the place on earth where he dwelled (Eden and the Promised Land). Yet they were and will be redeemed in a new Eden to live with God and the risen Jesus.

The point is that all these figures point to Jesus in some way, and *he completes the patterns.* He is the unified picture that becomes visible when the pieces are all detected and put in their proper places. Everything was in plain sight, yet undetectable without hindsight.

Why This Matters

Intelligent evil—Satan, demons, the lesser gods who rule the nations—do not know everything. They do not have the mind of God, nor can they penetrate it. We tend to presume that because they are supernatural they are all-knowing. Not true. There is only *one* omniscient being—God. And he happens to be on our side.

Because of the fall, Satan had rightful jurisdiction over us all. What do I mean? Because of Adam's sin, "death spread to all" (Rom. 5:12). The Serpent was cursed, cast down to rule over the realm of the dead—the underworld, or what we refer to as hell. Because of the fall, everyone is destined to die and go to the realm of the dead—where the Devil reigns.

That all changed when Jesus came *the first time* and fulfilled God's plan of salvation by dying on the cross and rising from the dead. The first step to restoring Eden was to provide a means for humanity to escape the curse of death. All who believe, who are made members of God's family and

kingdom, are no longer hostage to the curse of death and the lord of the dead. This is why Jesus, when beginning his ministry of reviving the kingdom (Luke 10:1–9), said: "I saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18). Jesus knew his death and resurrection would pay the sinner's debt, leaving Satan with no claim on our souls. The kingdom was the beginning of the end for the lord of the dead.

We must, again, remember who we are—and where our identity comes from. Believers, collectively as the church, are called *the body of Christ*. And Jesus' body was raised. We will rise because he has risen (1 Cor. 15:20–23). He is *the firstborn* of the dead. We are "the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven" (Heb. 12:22–24). As John said, "But as many as received him—to those who believe in his name—he gave to them authority to become children of God" (John 1:12 LEB). *Satan has no claim on the children of God* because they will rise from death. There is no reason to look for the living in the realm of the dead.

God wouldn't reveal his hand to anyone—be they human or divine, loyal or adversarial. The specifics of how the messiah would accomplish God's purposes had to be hidden. But God *would* let them know in unmistakable terms that when the messiah appeared, he would be God in human flesh, and the restoration of the Edenic kingdom was the endgame. As we'll see in the next two chapters, that was just enough information to prompt faith in people's hearts and to bait the powers of darkness into putting their own destruction into motion.

CHAPTER **ELEVEN**

Supernatural Intent

In the last chapter, we saw how the Old Testament presents the messiah by hiding him in plain sight. The key to God's plan to restore Eden and redeem humanity was for the messiah, Jesus, to die on the cross and then rise from the dead.

Only by becoming a man could God ensure that a human king from the line of David would rule over his people without falling into sin and straying spiritually. Only if that king died in the place of his people and rose from the dead could God rightly judge sin *and* provide salvation all at the same time. Only by the messiah's death and resurrection would fallen people still have a place in God's family council, ruling in that renewed Edenic kingdom, as originally planned.

But think about all that required: Jesus had to somehow make sure the supernatural powers of darkness manipulated men to kill him—without understanding what they were really doing. As Paul had said to the Corinthians (1 Cor. 2:6–8), if they really knew what the results were going to be, they never would have crucified the Lord.

The life and ministry of Jesus may make more sense when viewed against that backdrop. It's easy for readers of the New Testament, for instance, to get the impression that Jesus' ministry leading up to the cross was somewhat random. After all, the Gospels don't always present the same episodes—for example, the birth of Jesus is found in only two of them (Matthew and Luke), and only one mentions the wise men (Matt. 2). Sometimes scenes appear in a slightly different order in different gospels. But those acts of Jesus recorded in the Gospels leading up to the crucifixion —healing the sick, preaching about the kingdom of God, forgiving sinners, confronting hypocrisy—were more than the random acts of a traveling wise

man who occasionally did miraculous things. There's more going on in the gospel stories than meets the eye. There's an important subtext to what Jesus was doing.

Outwitting Evil

The event that marked the beginning of Jesus' public ministry was his baptism. It was there that God publicly identified Jesus as his Son (Mark 1:11), and there that John the Baptist identified him as the one who "takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). When we read those words from John, we think immediately about the crucifixion. But John's disciples weren't thinking about that. Frankly, no one was. When, close to the end of his ministry—over three years after his baptism—Jesus began to speak of his death, his own disciples rejected the idea (Matt. 17:22–23; Mark 9:30–32). The last thing they expected to hear from their Lord was that he was going to die soon. That was crazy talk. They didn't understand Jesus' death on the cross had been the plan from the beginning. Why didn't they? Because, as we discussed in the previous chapter, the plan wasn't presented in the Old Testament with open clarity.

After Jesus' baptism, he was driven into the wilderness by the Spirit to confront Satan (Matt. 4:1; Mark 1:12; Luke 4:1–13). That the Devil came to tempt Jesus tells us Satan knew who Jesus was—he was the messiah on a mission to re-install God's "home rule" on earth. After all, the "anointed one" (messiah) would be a king in the line of David. Satan, the "ruler of this world" (John 12:31), understood Jesus would set his sights on Satan's dominion—the nations God had cast aside at the Tower of Babel before creating Israel (Deut. 4:19–20; 32:8–9).

Most of us recall the scene between Jesus and Satan. Satan tempted Jesus three times (Matt. 4:3–11). Satan's third strategy for getting Jesus to violate his relationship with God was to offer the Son of God the nations of the world (Matt. 4:8–9), the very thing he presumed Jesus had come to reclaim:

> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. And he said to him,

> "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me." (Matt. 4:8–9)

Satan's proposal was a clever altering of God's plan. It would produce the result God desired—retrieval of the nations he had disinherited from being his people. Mission accomplished. All Jesus had to do was worship Satan instead of God.

Satan's offer reveals that he hadn't yet realized God's plan *required* Jesus' death. Jesus didn't tip him off, either. He didn't explain his refusal. He simply told Satan to get lost. God would take back what was his when and how he wanted. The mission of Jesus wasn't just about ruling all the nations. It was about rebuilding a family. Including in that family people from all nations, not just Israel, meant that sin must be atoned for. As he'd originally planned, God's rule would involve his children. The cross was essential to redeeming humanity and therefore to putting God's plan into place. Jesus wasn't going to be tricked—but the Devil *would* be, in due time.

A Taste of Eden

Immediately after the temptation in the desert, Jesus did two things: called his first disciples (Peter, Andrew, James, and John) and healed a demon-possessed man (Mark 1:16–28; Luke 4:31–5:11). Both the calling of disciples and healing continued, forming the beginning of a pattern. As he called more disciples, he gave them power to cast out demons and heal people of every disease, handicap, and condition (Luke 9:1–5).

Jesus initially called twelve disciples. The number isn't accidental. It corresponds to the twelve tribes of Israel. Jesus began the kingdom plan with Israel in view. They are, after all, God's portion, chosen above all the other nations (Deut. 32:8–9). Paul would later view the spread of the gospel the same way—start with the Jews, then go to the Gentiles (Rom. 1:16–17).

Jesus didn't stop with the Twelve. In Luke 10 he commissioned seventy more people to heal and cast out demons (Luke 10:1, 9, 17). That number wasn't accidental. It's the number of nations listed in Genesis 10—the nations God cast aside at the Tower of Babel event and placed under the

dominion of lesser gods (Deut. 4:19–20; 32:8–9). Some translations have *seventy-two,* rather than seventy, in these verses. That's because some ancient manuscripts of the Old Testament present the names of the nations in Genesis 10 in such a way that they add up to seventy-two. Either way, the point is the same—the sending of these men corresponds to the number of the nations in Genesis 10. Just as the calling of the Twelve was a sign that the kingdom had come to Israel, so the sending of the seventy signaled that the kingdom would take back the nations.

When the seventy return (Luke 10:17) Jesus' response is telling: "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" (Luke 10:18). The messaging is dramatic: The great reversal was underway. Satan would no longer have any claim over humanity once people belonged to Jesus. His access to God to "accuse believers" (Rev. 12:10 GNT) was over. He was a prosecutor without a case.

Come and Get Me

After three years of preaching about the coming kingdom of God, showing people God's love, and demonstrating what life in an Edenic world would look like, Jesus began to prepare for the end—for his real purpose.

Just before what would become his final journey to Jerusalem, Jesus took the disciples to the far north of Israel. He needed to provoke the crucifixion. He couldn't have picked a better place to throw down the gauntlet to the supernatural powers.

Jesus brought the disciples to a place called Caesarea Philippi. But that was its Roman name. In Old Testament times the region was called Bashan. We've talked about it before, in chapter 9. Bashan was considered the gateway to the realm of the dead—the gates of hell. Caesarea Philippi is situated at the foot of Mount Hermon, the place where, in Jewish thinking, the sons of God came to earth in the rebellion described in Genesis 6:1–4. In a nutshell, in Old Testament times Bashan and Hermon were ground zero for the evil cosmic powers.

It was at this place that Jesus asked his well-known question, "Who do you say that I am?" (Matt. 16:15). Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the

Son of the living God" (v. 16). Jesus commended him and added:

> Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. (vv. 17–18)

The identification of the "rock" Jesus referred to has been debated for centuries. The key to understanding the term is the area's geography. Caesarea Philippi sits in the far northern region of Bashan. In Old Testament times, this area was thought to contain gateways to the realm of the dead. Caesarea Philippi sits at the foot of a mountain. The "rock" is that mountain. The "gates of hell" marks the very place where Jesus and his disciples were standing.

Jesus was challenging the powers of darkness. At the fall, humanity lost eternal life with God and earned instead a fate of death and eternal separation from God. The lord of the dead—the Serpent, known as Satan and the Devil—had claim over humanity. Every human would join him in the realm of the dead. But God had other ideas. The secret plan to send Jesus to pay the penalty for humanity's sin would be a frontal assault on the gates of hell. The lord of the dead and his forces would not be able to withstand the kingdom of God. In essence, in that passage in Matthew 16, Jesus goes to the Devil's front door and challenges his claim. Jesus wanted to provoke Satan. Why? Because it was time for Jesus to die to propel God's secret plan into motion.

As if that verbal challenge wasn't enough, Jesus went one step further. Matthew, Mark, and Luke all agree that the next event in the ministry of Jesus was the transfiguration. Mark 9:2–8 reads:

> Six days later Jesus took with him Peter, James, and John, and led them up a high mountain, where they were alone. As they looked on, a change came over Jesus, and his clothes became shining white—whiter than anyone in the world could wash them. Then the three disciples saw Elijah and Moses talking with Jesus. Peter spoke up and said to Jesus, "Teacher, how good it is that we are here! We will make three tents, one for you, one for Moses, and one for Elijah."

> He and the others were so frightened that he did not know what to say. Then a cloud appeared and covered them with its shadow, and a voice came from the cloud, "This is my own dear Son—listen to him!" They took a quick look around but did not see anyone else; only Jesus was with them. (GNT)

The transfiguration takes place on Mount Hermon. Jesus picked this very spot to reveal to Peter, James, and John exactly who he was—the embodied glory of God. He was putting Satan and the powers of darkness on notice: *I've come to earth to take back what is mine. The kingdom of God is at hand*. In effect: "I'm here—*now do something about it*."

It's no accident that immediately after the transfiguration Jesus turned toward Jerusalem and began telling his disciples he was going to die there. They didn't want to hear it. But Jesus had baited Satan and the rest of the evil powers into action. There would be a sense of urgency to get rid of him. And that's just what Jesus wanted. His death was the key to everything.

Why This Matters

Jesus' ministry was intentional. He had a clear view of his role in reviving the kingdom of God on earth so it would progress until the day he returned, a day that would usher in a global Eden.

Our lives are not as pivotal as his, but each of us, like the disciples, has a true role to fulfill. We need to live as if we believe that. Believers brought into God's family council are brought in to be not observers but participants (Col. 1:13).

Among the intentions of Jesus was to show people what Eden had been like, and what life with God would be. In God's family and God's rule, there will be no disease and physical imperfection. There will also be no hostile powers. God's ultimate kingdom is bigger than a garden, wider than Israel. The kingdom will be global. It will include all nations. And it will be everything Eden was—heaven on earth.

Our task is to imitate Jesus. We can, like him, care for both body and soul of our fellow imagers, leading them to faith in the King and strengthening their resolve to be loyal to him. It doesn't necessarily take

supernatural power to "bind up the brokenhearted" and "proclaim liberty to the captives" in the steps of the messiah (Isa. 61:1), but these are supernatural acts at the core. They demand resistance to darkness and strategic vision. No act of kindness will fail to be used by the Spirit to direct someone's heart. No articulation of the gospel will be fruitless. Jesus' kindness was congruent with his message. Neither diminished the other. This is a pattern any believer can imitate—and it is the job description for kingdom vision.

Last, we are reminded again that intelligent evil not only has limitations, but it is *vulnerable* to kingdom vision and action. Jesus is already seated "at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him" (1 Pet. 3:22). We are "already but not yet" co-rulers with him (Col. 3:1; 2 Tim. 2:12; Rev. 2:26; 3:21). The gates of hell will not withstand the progression and completion of the Church as God's kingdom on earth. The decision to participate in the great reversal is ours.

CHAPTER **TWELVE**

The Cloud Rider

I closed the last chapter by noting how Jesus began to talk about his death immediately after baiting the powers of darkness at the gates of hell and Mount Hermon. The challenge set in motion a string of events that would lead to the Lord's trial and his death on the cross. Christians have read about the trial of Jesus many times. But there's a supernatural backdrop to it that is frequently overlooked.

To understand what finally draws the death sentence from the Jewish authorities and the transfer of Jesus to Pontius Pilate to carry it out, we have to go back to the Old Testament book of Daniel—to a meeting God holds with his heavenly host, his divine council.

The Ancient of Days and His Council

Daniel 7 begins with an odd vision. Daniel sees four beasts coming out of the sea (Dan. 7:1–8). They're all freakish, but the fourth beast is the worst. In the dreams interpreted in the Old Testament, both objects and living things always represent something, and in this dream, the four beasts in Daniel's vision are four empires. We know that because his vision aligns with the themes of Nebuchadnezzar's dream in Daniel 2, which was about Babylon and three other empires to follow. Our focus, though, is on what Daniel describes next:

> As I looked, thrones were placed, and the Ancient of Days took his seat; his clothing was white as snow, and the hair of his head like pure wool; his throne was fiery flames; its wheels were burning fire. A stream of fire issued and came out from before him; a thousand thousands served him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood

> before him; the court sat in judgment, and the books were opened. (Dan. 7:9–10)

We know the Ancient of Days is the God of Israel. That's pretty easy to determine, especially if we compare the description of his throne to Ezekiel's vision of God's throne (Ezek. 1). The fire, wheels, and human form on the throne in that vision are the same as Daniel's.

But did you notice there isn't just one throne? There are a number of thrones in Daniel's vision (Dan. 7:9)—enough for the divine court, God's council (Dan. 7:10).

The heavenly court meets to decide the fate of the beasts—the empires—in the vision. It is decided that the fourth beast must be killed and the other beasts rendered powerless (Dan. 7:11–12). They will be displaced by another king and kingdom. And that's where things get even more interesting.

The Son of Man Who Comes on the Clouds

Daniel continues narrating his vision:

> I saw in the night visions, and behold, with the clouds of heaven there came one like a son of man, and he came to the Ancient of Days and was presented before him. And to him was given dominion and glory and a kingdom, that all peoples, nations, and languages should serve him; his dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and his kingdom one that shall not be destroyed. (Dan. 7:13–14)

"Son of Man" is a phrase used many times in the Old Testament. It should be no surprise that it speaks of a human. The surprise is how else this human is described in this passage. Daniel 7:13 describes a man *coming on the clouds* to the Ancient of Days.

Why is that a big deal? Because everywhere else that description occurs in the Old Testament, it was used *only* of God himself (Isa. 19:1; Deut. 33:26; Ps. 68:32–33; Ps. 104:1–4). But in Daniel 7, *God was already in the scene* as the Ancient of Days. It's as if, in his vision, Daniel sees a "second

God" who is also a man—something like the way Christians believe in God as more than one person.

That's precisely the point.

As Jesus stood before Caiaphas at his trial in Matthew 26, his life hanging in the balance, he hit a nerve by appealing to this idea:

> Now the chief priests and the whole council were seeking false testimony against Jesus that they might put him to death, but they found none, though many false witnesses came forward. At last two came forward and said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God, and to rebuild it in three days.' " And the high priest stood up and said, "Have you no answer to make? What is it that these men testify against you?" But Jesus remained silent. And the high priest said to him, "I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God." Jesus said to him, "You have said so. But I tell you, from now on you will see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." Then the high priest tore his robes and said, "He has uttered blasphemy. What further witnesses do we need? You have now heard his blasphemy. What is your judgment?" They answered, "He deserves death." (Matt. 26:59–66).

In what seems like a pointless answer to a clear question, Jesus quoted Daniel 7:13 in response to Caiaphas. *Do you want to really know who I am, Caiaphas? Listen carefully.* The reaction is immediate. Caiaphas understood in an instant that Jesus was claiming to be the second God figure of Daniel 7:13—the human who was described in a way only God was described in the Old Testament. He was claiming to be God in human form. That was blasphemy—and grounds for a death sentence.

But Jesus, of course, knew that. He had no interest in protecting himself. He knew he *must* die to restore God's kingdom, bring believers into God's family, and reclaim the nations from the evil principalities and powers who controlled the nations God rejected at Babel.

And die he did. Psalm 22, well-known for how it describes the physical effects of crucifixion through the words of David, gives us a glimpse of

horrors unseen at the cross. The suffering psalmist moans:

> All who see me make fun of me;
> they stick out their tongues and shake their heads.
> "You relied on the LORD," they say.
> "Why doesn't he save you?
> If the LORD likes you,
> why doesn't he help you?" …
>
> Many enemies surround me like bulls;
> they are all round me,
> like fierce bulls from the land of Bashan.
> They open their mouths like lions,
> roaring and tearing at me.
>
> My strength is gone,
> gone like water spilled on the ground.
> All my bones are out of joint. (Ps. 22:7–14 GNT)

The creepy part of this description is the fierce bulls *from Bashan.* As we noted earlier, in Old Testament times, Bashan was ground zero to demonic gods and the realm of the dead. The area was a leading center for the worship of Baal, symbolized by bulls and cows. "Bulls from the land of Bashan" is a reference to demons, the powers of darkness. In our own time, the imagery was captured in all its eerie repulsion by C. S. Lewis in *The Lion, the Witch, and the Wardrobe*. No one who has read that book or seen the movie can forget Aslan humbly surrendering his life to the delighted hordes of the White Witch on the Stone Table.

And just as Jesus had utterly outwitted Satan, Aslan had played the White Witch for a fool. What evil misperceived as the moment of triumph turned out to be its own irreversible defeat.

You Are Gods, but You Will Die Like Men

Satan's loss of his claim over the lives of the children of Adam was not the only loss he suffered at the cross. His cohorts in rebellion, the supernatural gods (*elohim*) of the nations, would see their domains begin to vanish.

The supernatural gods had been assigned those nations by the Most High, the God of Israel (Deut. 4:19–20; 32:8–9). We are not told when they became enemies of God, but they did. They had turned God's own people, Israel, away from worshipping him to instead sacrifice to them (Deut. 17:1–3; 29:26–27; 32:17). Psalm 82, the psalm we looked at in chapter 2 to introduce the divine council, tells us these *elohim* abused their power and rewarded evil. They have no care for God's law or justice:

> God presides in the heavenly council;
> In the assembly of the gods (*elohim*) he gives his decision:
> "You must stop judging unjustly;
> you must no longer be partial to the wicked!
> Defend the rights of the poor and the orphans;
> be fair to the needy and the helpless.
> Rescue them from the power of evil people.
>
> "How ignorant you are! How stupid!
> You are completely corrupt,
> and justice has disappeared from the world."
>
> (Ps. 82:1–5 GNT)

The rest of the psalm tells us God had called this heavenly council meeting to tell the gods their future was bleak. Their reigns of terror would end when God decided to reclaim the nations:

> " 'You are gods,' I said;
> 'all of you are children of the Most High.'
> But you will die like mortals;
> your life will end like that of any prince."
> Come, O God, and rule the world;
> all the nations are yours." (Ps. 82:6–8 GNT)

When would God decide to reclaim the nations? We read the answer earlier in Daniel 7:14 (GNT):

> He was given authority, honor, and royal power, so that the people of all nations, races, and languages would serve him. His authority would last forever, and his kingdom would never end.

The messaging of Daniel 7:13–14 is clear—when the Son of Man receives the kingdom, it will be the beginning of the end for the supernatural powers of darkness. Jesus received the kingdom at his resurrection. God "raised Christ from death and seated him at his right side in the heavenly world. Christ rules there above all heavenly rulers, authorities, powers, and lords; he has a title superior to all titles of authority in this world and in the next" (Eph. 1:20–21 GNT).

Why This Matters

Before the cross, Satan had eternal claim on our souls. All humans die—and so, go to the realm of the dead, *his domain.* And there we would remain—were it not for the sacrifice of Jesus and his resurrection. Through faith in his work on the cross, we are raised with him. As we saw in the previous chapter, Satan was expelled from God's presence when the kingdom began on earth (Luke 10:18). God would have no more of his accusations against believers. He had no more right to our souls.

Why, then, do we live as though he does?

Salvation is not gained by moral perfection. It is a gift that comes by grace, through faith (Eph. 2:8–9). That in turn means salvation cannot be *lost* by moral imperfection. What is not at all gained by performance cannot be lost by poor performance. Salvation is about *believing loyalty*—trusting what Jesus did to defeat Satan's claim and turning from all other gods and the belief systems of which they are a part.

That is the message of God's kingdom we are commissioned to tell to the nations (Matt. 28:19–20). And as we obey, the dominions of the enemy gods, the principalities and powers, shrink—soul by soul, moment by moment. The gates of hell, the realm of the dead, *do not* withstand the resurrection, and *will not* withstand the advance of the gospel.

At the time of Jesus' crucifixion, though, none of this seemed real to the disciples. But they would soon get the message in a dramatic, unforgettable way.

CHAPTER **THIRTEEN**

The Great Reversal

Aside from stories about Jesus in the Gospels—such as accounts of his birth, death, and Sermon on the Mount—perhaps the most familiar passage in the New Testament is Acts 2, where the Holy Spirit rushes upon the followers of Jesus at the day of Pentecost. It marks the launch of the fledgling church and the beginning of global evangelism in the name of Jesus.

As familiar as the passage is, there's a lot more going on in it than most realize. Acts 2 is in fact designed to telegraph the campaign to reverse the post-Babel cosmic geography of the Old Testament, in which the nations other than Israel were under the dominion of lesser gods. What happened at Pentecost was a battle plan for infiltrating all the nations disinherited by God at Babel with the gospel of Jesus—an ancient strategy for spiritual war.

Pentecost

What Acts 2 describes as happening on the day of Pentecost was certainly unusual:

> And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in the same place. And suddenly a sound like a violent rushing wind came from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. And divided tongues like fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages as the Spirit gave them ability to speak out. Now there were Jews residing in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven. And when this sound occurred, the crowd gathered and was in confusion, because each one was hearing

> them speaking in his own language. And they were astounded and astonished, saying, "Behold, are not all these who are speaking Galileans? And how do we hear, each one of us, in our own native language?" (Acts 2:1–8 LEB)

Some of the things that take us into the supernatural worldview of the Old Testament in that remarkable passage aren't obvious in the English translation. The "rushing wind" associated with the arrival of the Spirit is a familiar description of the presence of God in the Old Testament (2 Kings 2:1, 11; Job 38:1; 40:6). Fire is also familiar in descriptions of God (Ezek. 1:4; Isa. 6:4, 6; Dan. 7:9; Ex. 3:2; 19:18; 20:18).

It's clear from those references that God was present at the event and behind what was going on. His intention was to launch his campaign to take back the nations from the lesser gods he assigned to the nations (Deut. 4:19–20; 32:8–9) but who became his enemies (Ps. 82).

God's tool for doing that was the words of the disciples—hence the imagery of tongues. God enabled the Jewish followers of Jesus to speak to the rest of the Jews gathered at Pentecost—who lived in *all* the nations under the dominion of enemy gods. When they heard the gospel and believed, they would go back to their nations and tell others about Jesus.

Pentecost and Babel

The Tower of Babel incident was what gave rise to God's decision to scatter the nations and put them under the authority of other gods (Deut. 4:19–20; 32:8–9). At first glance there doesn't seem to be much connection between that event and what happened in Acts 2. But in the original languages, there are clear connections between the two.

Two key items in Acts 2 connect its events to Babel. First, the flaming tongues are described as "divided," and second, the crowd, composed of Jews from all the nations, are said to have been "confused." In English, that may not seem particularly convincing. Luke is writing in Greek, and the Greek words he used here translated as "divided" and "confusion" come from Genesis 11:7 and Deuteronomy 32:8, both of which describe the division of the languages and nations at Babel and the resulting confusion.

Luke, the author of Acts, was a Gentile. He could only read Greek. Consequently, he was using the Greek translation of the Old Testament known widely then (and still today) as the Septuagint. It was the Old Testament of the early church, since few people could read Hebrew. Luke was thinking of the Babel event when he wrote Acts 2.

But why make the connection? Think about what happened at Pentecost. The Spirit came as God so often had come in the Old Testament, with rushing wind and fire. The confusion of having multiple languages (which was a result of Babel) was removed when the flaming tongues enabled the disciples to speak in the languages of the Jews from all across the world gathered in Jerusalem for the celebration. Three thousand of them believed the message about Jesus (Acts 2:41).

Those new believers who embraced Jesus as messiah would carry that message back to their home countries—the nations scattered at Babel. Back in Genesis 11, God had turned his back on the nations of humanity and, right afterward, in Genesis 12, called Abraham to establish God's new people and nation. He was now going to gather people from all those nations he had rejected and bring them back into his believing family alongside Jewish believers descended from Abraham. In time, God's kingdom would overspread the kingdoms of the enemy gods.

The incredible part of all this is the list of nations in Acts 2 and the order they are presented. If you looked them up on a map, you would move from the east, where the Jews had been exiled at the end of the Old Testament in Babylon and Persia, westward to the farthest point known at the time. They cover the same distance and scope as the nations listed in Genesis 10—the ones put under the lesser gods.

We Wrestle Not against Flesh and Blood

Most of the book of Acts is about Paul's missionary journeys. Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles—the person initially sent by God to start churches in the nations outside Israel. Paul's journeys and life circumstances, such as his arrest by the Romans, took him ever westward.

In his New Testament letters, Paul often talked about the spiritual forces opposing his ministry and the spread of the gospel. His vocabulary for the evil entities whose domains he violated in the wake of Pentecost shows that he understood the Old Testament's cosmic geography. Do you notice a common thread running through Paul's terminology (drawn from the ESV) for the unseen forces of darkness?

- rulers/principalities (Eph. 1:20–21; 6:12; Col. 2:15)
- authorities (Eph. 1:20–21; 3:10; 6:12; Col. 2:15; 1 Cor. 2:6)
- powers (Eph. 1:20–21; 3:10)
- dominions (Col. 1:16)
- lords (Eph. 1:20–21; 1 Cor. 8:5)
- thrones (Col. 1:16)

All of these words denote *geographical rulership.* In fact, these same terms are used in the New Testament and other Greek literature of human political power holders. Paul's language is that of domain authority. It reflects how the Old Testament depicts the spiritual world's relationship to the human world: the nations set aside by God are under the dominion of spiritual beings hostile to him and his people.

"I Will Go to Spain"

The book of Acts ends with Paul journeying to Rome. Paul was a prisoner, and he was going to Rome for two reasons: to appeal to Caesar and to spread the gospel. But Paul knew that to reclaim the nations under the hostile gods, he had to get to the end of the known world at the time. In Old Testament times, that place had been called Tarshish. In Paul's day, it was called Spain. Paul had to get to Spain to complete his mission. His words to the Romans before his imprisonment tell us he fully intended to go to Spain —to the westward end of the earth in his day—to reclaim every nation for Jesus:

> I hope to see you in passing as I go to Spain, and to be helped on my journey there by you, once I have enjoyed your company for a

> while.… When therefore I have completed this and have delivered to them what has been collected, I will leave for Spain by way of you. (Rom. 15:24, 28)

Paul was motivated by the realization that God's plan to restore his kingdom had been launched in his own lifetime. He believed that when "the fullness of the Gentiles has come in" then "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:25–26). He thought he was to finish what Pentecost had begun.

Why This Matters

Paul had a supernatural perspective on his own life. He viewed himself as an instrument of God. And he was. But so were all the other unnamed new believers who, after Pentecost, went before him from Jerusalem to infiltrate demonic strongholds where they lived.

And so are we.

If *we* are instruments of God in the same way *Paul* was an instrument of God, then why was he so much more influential and effective? One difference is that Paul *understood* what his life was about. He *believed* the powers that had dominion over the earth were real—and that the power behind and within him was greater.

Do you believe those things? The Bible puts them forth as givens. And that's how Paul treated them in his own life.

Paul didn't know how big the world really was. He didn't know about North America, South America, China, India, Norway, Australia, Iceland, and many other places. God did. God knew the task of spreading the gospel to all the world would ultimately be much greater than Paul could comprehend. God knew others would have to follow Paul's goal for himself if the gospel was to reach every part of the earth. If we're not actively trying to complete the task, we aren't doing what we're here on earth to do. If we want God only so he will come to us to meet our needs, then we're more like the people at Babel than we are like Jesus, the Twelve, and Paul.

Another implication of the passages of Scripture we've examined is that the notion of demonic strongholds is biblical. We aren't given a full description of demonic zones or turf boundaries, or even a spiritual pecking

order for the dark side. We *are* told, however, that the unseen powers see earth as their domain. We're told those powers resist God's kingdom and don't want people to become part of God's plan to spread his good rule everywhere. That means we should *expect* resistance we can't explain with logic or empirical evidence and we can't defeat it on our own. God has given us his Spirit and unseen agents of his own to help us further his mission (1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; Heb. 1:13; 1 John 4:4).

The real question to ask ourselves is this: What would our lives be like if we woke up each day with a view of the world and its supernatural influences that matched Paul's? What if, each day, our lives were organized around our knowledge of our status as part of God's family, tasked with delivering siblings from darkness? What if we lived intentionally, knowing that each decision we make and each word we speak isn't randomly purposeless? What if, instead, we believed unseen intelligences all around us use our decisions, our actions, our words to influence other people—for good or evil—whether or not we see or know them? Our jobs, our income, our talents, even our problems are of no consequence when it comes to knowing who we *really* are, and will be, and why we're here. We cannot see the supernatural world—nor can we see the microscopic world—but we're inextricably part of both.

Early believers thought this way. As we'll see in the next chapter, they believed the world around them was enslaved to darkness that would one day yield. Despite the fact that the battle was literally them against the hostile world and its powers, they quietly produced the global thing we call Christianity, with God and his unseen agents working with them. They *believed* the spiritual conflict was real and that, ultimately, they couldn't lose. We're living proof that they didn't.

CHAPTER **FOURTEEN**

Not of This World

In Jesus' well-known prayer in the garden of Gethsemane before he was arrested for trial, he said of his followers, "They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world" (John 17:16). Believers were certainly *in* the world, specially tasked by God to carry the gospel to every nation (Matt. 28:19–20), but they were not *of* the world. This paradox—being in the world but not of it—was telegraphed to early Christians in several memorable ways.

Sacred Space, Holy Ground, and God's Presence

In chapter 8 we talked about the concept of sacred space. For Old Testament Israelites, God was completely *other*. The space his presence occupied was set apart from all other space. That wasn't a denial that God was omnipresent—in all places at all times. Rather, it was a way of marking the territory on which he chose to meet with his people. That was one of the purposes for having the tabernacle and the temple. The concept of sacred space was not only the rationale for many of Israel's laws and rituals, but it also reinforced the idea of cosmic geography—how the world was divided among the lesser gods and the Most High God, the God of Israel.

The notion of sacred space gets brought into the New Testament in a dramatic way. All we need to ask is, "Where is the presence of God right now?" While God is everywhere, he specifically dwells *within each believer*. Believe it or not, *you* are sacred space. Paul very clearly wrote that "your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor. 6:19).

The same is true of the ground where believers gather as a group. Writing to the church at Corinth, Paul told them collectively, "You are

God's temple" (1 Cor. 3:16). He told the Ephesian believers they were "members of the household of God … a holy temple in the Lord. In him you also are built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit" (Eph. 2:19, 21–22).

The implications are startling. Most of us are familiar with Jesus' statement, "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in the midst of them" (Matt. 18:20 LEB). But viewed in the context of the Old Testament idea of sacred space, that statement means that wherever believers gather, the spiritual ground they occupy is sanctified amid the powers of darkness.

Yahweh's final chosen dwelling place in the Old Testament was Israel—the temple in Jerusalem. Israel became holy ground because that's where God's presence resided. But that holy ground was threatened by the nations that surrounded it and their hostile gods. In the same way, believers today are in a spiritual war. We are now God's temple, the special place God's Spirit resides, points of the light of his presence—and we are scattered throughout a world in bondage to the powers of darkness.

Delivered unto Satan

This concept is illustrated well by Paul's view on the sanctity of the local church. Every body of believers was holy ground, no place for unrepentant sin.

In chapter 8 we looked at how the camp of Israel dealt with sin to preserve the sanctity of the camp—its sacred space. We talked about the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16), where the sins of the nation were ritually transferred to a goat—the one "for Azazel" (Lev. 16:8, 10). Azazel was a demonic entity thought to inhabit the wilderness. The Israelites sent the goat out into the wilderness, carrying their sins away. The act symbolically sent the sins of the people where they belonged—into the wilderness, the place of spiritual darkness.

Paul has the Corinthians deal with sin the same way—sending it where it belongs. In 1 Corinthians 5, Paul wrote to the Corinthians about a man living in sexual immorality who needed to repent. He commanded, "Hand

this man over to Satan" (1 Cor. 5:5 GNT). The rationale was clear—sin has no place on holy ground. Believers were to remove unrepentant believers from the church (1 Cor. 5:9–13). To be expelled from the church was to be thrust into the realm of Satan, back out into the world.

Paul hoped the result for the unrepentant man would be "the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord" (1 Cor. 5:5). (The reference here isn't to physical death, but to the death of the fleshly lusts ensnaring this man [Gal. 5:24; 1 Cor. 11:32–33]).

Baptism as Spiritual Warfare

Peter's stand on this issue was the same as Paul's—believers were pitted against the powers of darkness. His warfare thinking is found in one of the stranger passages in the New Testament, 1 Peter 3:14–22:

> But even if you might suffer for the sake of righteousness, you are blessed. And do not be afraid of their intimidation or be disturbed, but set Christ apart as Lord in your hearts, always ready to make a defense to anyone who asks you for an accounting concerning the hope that is in you. But do so with courtesy and respect, having a good conscience, so that in the things in which you are slandered, the ones who malign your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. For it is better to suffer for doing good, if God wills it, than for doing evil. For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, in order that he could bring you to God, being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which also he went and proclaimed to the spirits in prison, who were formerly disobedient, when the patience of God waited in the days of Noah, while an ark was being constructed, in which a few—that is, eight souls—were rescued through water. And also, corresponding to this, baptism now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him. (LEB)

I'm sure you noticed the oddities in the passage. What do the ark, Noah, and imprisoned spirits have to do with baptism? And does this text say baptism saves us?

What Peter is doing here is similar to something Paul does in Romans 5. Paul talked about Jesus in that passage, but with Adam in mind as well. Think of Jesus as, in some ways, the opposite of Adam. That's why Paul says things like "as by the one man's disobedience [Adam's] the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience [Jesus'] the many will be made righteous" (Rom. 5:19). Peter has Enoch, rather than Adam, in mind when he writes about Jesus in 1 Peter 3. But for Peter, Enoch and Jesus weren't opposites. Enoch serves as an analogy for the point Peter wants to make about Jesus.

You might wonder, "What point?" After all, there are only a handful of verses about Enoch in the Old Testament (Gen. 5:18–24). All we learn there is that he lived before the great flood and that "Enoch walked faithfully with God; then he was no more, because God took him away" (Gen. 5:24 NIV). Those verses don't really have any connection to what Peter says in 1 Peter 3 about Jesus.

To understand why something Enoch did reminded Peter of Jesus, we need to understand that Peter read about Enoch in Jewish books outside the Old Testament. Specifically, Peter was familiar with an ancient Jewish book that had a lot to say about Enoch. It was named, predictably, 1 Enoch. That book filled in lots of details about what happened at the time of the flood, especially the episode in Genesis 6:1–4, where the sons of God (Enoch calls them watchers) produced children (the Nephilim giants) with human women. When both Peter and Jude wrote about angels who sinned in the days of Noah (2 Pet. 2:4–5; Jude 6), they were alluding to ideas in 1 Enoch that are not part of the biblical flood story. The Genesis flood account, for example, never tells us that the divine sons of God were imprisoned in the underworld realm of the dead until the end of days, but 1 Enoch does (1 Enoch 6:1–4; 7:1–6; 10:4, 11–13).

Something that happened to these "spirits in prison" in the book of 1 Enoch gave Peter an insight into Jesus. In the 1 Enoch story, Enoch has a dream where the imprisoned spirits asked him to intercede with God on their behalf. After all, Enoch walked with God—who better to ask God to

relent and release them? Enoch did so, but got bad news. God's answer was an emphatic *no*. Enoch then had to deliver that answer—he descended to the spirits in prison. He told them they were still under judgment.

Peter used that story as an analogy for Jesus. The point he wanted to get across was that when Jesus died, he descended to the realm of the dead and had a message for the fallen divine beings there. When they saw Jesus enter the place of the dead, they were likely to think their fellow demons had won and they would be getting out of jail soon. Instead, Jesus told them they wouldn't see him for long—he would rise again. It was all part of God's plan. They hadn't won—*they were still under judgment and as doomed as ever*. That's why this odd passage ends the way it does, with Jesus "gone into heaven" and seated "at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him" (1 Pet. 3:22).

Why does Peter connect all of this to baptism? In Peter's mind, Jesus' death and resurrection—complete with an announcement to the demonic powers of his victory—was symbolized in baptism. Baptism symbolizes the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (Rom. 6:1–11).

For Peter, baptism "corresponds" to all this because it is "an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:21). The Greek word for "appeal" refers to a pledge one takes. The Greek word for "conscience" often refers to an ability to tell right from wrong. But that isn't the case here. Knowing the difference between right and wrong doesn't have a specific relationship to the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. The Greek word can also point to making a commitment—and a good one, not a foolish one. That's what Peter is getting at in 1 Peter 3. In essence, *baptism was a loyalty oath and a message to the demonic powers* (as well as any people present) of just whose side you were on in the spiritual war. Ancient Christians understood this better than we do today. Early church baptismal rites included a renunciation of Satan *and his angels* because of this passage.

Why This Matters

First, understand that believers are holy ground, the dwelling place of God's presence—the glory of the Old Testament. Do we live like it? Israelites and

the believers of Jesus' day felt an ever-present need to be different from unbelievers. The goal wasn't to be deliberately odd so unbelievers would hope to avoid contact. Israel was to be a "kingdom of priests" and "a holy nation" (Ex. 19:6). Living the way God wanted his children to live led to fruitful, productive, happy lives. Israelites were to attract people enslaved by enemy gods back to the true God.

When our worldview is attuned to God's plan to rescue people from every nation, making them part of God's family, we are not of this world. Being of this world is to be absorbed by the world's concerns and living accordingly. Unbelievers should be able to tell from our speech, behavior, ethics, and attitude toward others that we're not cynical, selfish, or harsh—that our focus is not on getting ahead or on using people. We should not live to gratify ourselves. We are to be the antithesis of these things. In other words, we are to live as Jesus lived. People wanted to be around him *because* he wasn't like most everyone else.

Second, what we do in our churches should elevate God and Jesus. In biblical times, a visit to the tabernacle or temple reinforced ideas about God's perfection, otherness—and love for his children. Those things go hand-in-hand. Why would a God who needs nothing and is superior to everything want a human family? Why would that God bother creating a new family after casting aside the nations at Babel, consigning them to other gods? Why not just walk away? Because he loves us.

It's because we know God could have done something else but didn't that his love takes on meaning. When a church talks only about the love of God without pointing out the irony of that love when placed against God's other character traits, believers will take that love for granted. It might sound cheap, for instance, to people unaware of God's holiness.

A third implication of what we've discussed in this chapter is that the powers of darkness know whose side we are on by our behavior. They are not stupid. They see our loyalty to God, and they see us act on our decisions to follow Jesus through things like baptism and resistance to sin. But they also see us when we act disloyally to God, and they understand what vulnerability that introduces into our lives. Whether or not we believe it, we are being watched—*by both sides* of the spiritual war.

These truths are easier to understand than to live out. Though redeemed, we are fallen. To live these truths, we need our minds and hearts tuned to why we're here, living as foreigners in our own world. Like Jesus, we are not of this world—in it, but not of it (John 8:23; 1 John 4:4). That contrast, and our status, will become even sharper once we get a handle on just what it means to be children of God.

CHAPTER **FIFTEEN**

Partakers of the Divine Nature

Do you know who you are?

I asked the question earlier, but it's time to raise it again. Yes, we are in the world but not of it. True, we have been saved by grace through faith in what Jesus did on the cross (Eph. 2:8–9). But that's just the beginning of understanding what God has been up to.

God's original intention in Eden was to merge his human family with his divine family, the heavenly sons of God who were here before creation (Job 38:7–8). He didn't abandon that plan at the fall. Christian, you will be made divine, like one of God's *elohim* children, like Jesus himself (1 John 3:1–3).

Theologians refer to the idea by many labels. The most common is *glorification.* Peter referred to it as becoming "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). John put it this way: "See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; *and so we are*" (1 John 3:1, emphasis added). In this chapter we'll take a look at how the Bible conveys that message.

Sons of God, Seed of Abraham

When God turned the nations of the world over to lesser gods at Babel, he did so knowing he would start over with a new human family of his own. God called Abraham (Gen. 12:1–8) right after Babel (Gen. 11:1–9). Through Abraham and his wife Sarah, God would return to his original Edenic plan.

God's people, the children of Abraham, the Israelites, ultimately failed to restore God's good rule on earth. But one of those children *would*

succeed. God would become man in Jesus, a descendant of David, Abraham, and Adam. And it was through Jesus that God's promise to one day bless the nations he had punished at Babel was fulfilled. Paul wrote about that in several places. Here are two:

> According to revelation the mystery was made known to me, just as I wrote beforehand in brief, so that you may be able when you read to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ: … that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, and fellow members of the body, and fellow sharers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel." (Eph. 3:3–6 LEB)

> For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.… There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. And if you are Christ's, then you are descendants of Abraham, heirs according to the promise. (Gal. 3:26–29 LEB)

As I explained in earlier chapters: Throughout the Old Testament, those people who were not Israelites lived in territory that had come under the dominion of the lesser gods to whom God had assigned those nations at Babel. At Babel, the nations other than Israel had been disinherited from a relationship with the true God. Israel and only Israel was God's "portion" (Deut. 32:9) of humanity. Israelites referred to the people of the disinherited nations by many terms. There were geographical or ethnic labels (e.g., Egyptians, Moabites, Amalekites), but the comprehensive description in New Testament times was Gentile, a label that comes from the Latin word for "nations" (*gens*). If you aren't Jewish, you're a Gentile.

The story of the New Testament is that a descendant of Abraham—Jesus—died and rose again to redeem not only Abraham's ethnic descendants (Israelites/Jews) but also all the people among the nations who had formerly been disinherited from the true God. In the verses quoted just above, Paul called the inclusion of Gentiles in the family of God a mystery. It astonished him that people from the nations God had cast off, and which were under the control of other gods, could inherit the promises given to Abraham.

In Christ, *all* who embrace the gospel are children of Yahweh, the true God, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (John 1:12; Gal. 3:26; Rom. 8:14). This is why the New Testament talks about believers using family terms (sons, children, heir) and the language of being "adopted" by God (Rom. 8:15, 23; Eph. 1:5; Gal. 4:4). The language of inheritance is crystal clear and deliberate. It tells us who we are: the new divine-human family of God. The believer's destiny is to become what Adam and Eve originally were: immortal, glorified imagers of God, living in God's presence.

But even that doesn't fully express who we are. The most amazing part is how Jesus sees us.

A Family Reunion

The first two chapters of the book of Hebrews give us a dramatic picture of God's blended family—divine and human. For me, it's one of the most stirring passages in the Bible.

Hebrews 1 makes the point that Jesus is "so much better than the angels" (v. 4 LEB). No one is higher in God's heavenly council than Jesus. After all, he's God. In fact, the writer makes the point that since no angel was fit to become man and inherit the kingdom, angels need to worship Jesus (vv. 5–6 LEB). Jesus is king.

Remarkably, when Jesus became a man, he was for a short time lower than the angels. He became one of us. Humans are lesser creatures than divine beings like angels. The writer of Hebrews asks:

> What is man, that you are mindful of him, or the son of man, that you care for him? You made him for a little while lower than the angels; you have crowned him with glory and honor, putting everything in subjection under his feet.… But we see him who for a little while was made lower than the angels, namely Jesus, crowned with glory and honor because of the suffering of death, so that by the grace of God he might taste death for everyone. (Heb. 2:6–9).

What's the result of what Jesus did? We might say *salvation*. That would be right, but it misses what the writer of Hebrews wanted us to know.

Because God became man in Jesus Christ, his mortal followers will become divine—and members of the same family.

Someday, whether at our death or at his return to earth in the final form of the kingdom on earth, the new Eden, Jesus will introduce us to the rest of the divine council, and the council to us. He became as we are so we might become as he is:

> For it was fitting for him for whom are all things and through whom are all things in bringing many sons to glory to perfect the originator of their salvation through sufferings. For both the one who sanctifies and the ones who are sanctified are all from one, for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brothers, saying,
>
> > "I will proclaim your name to my brothers;
> > in the midst of the assembly I will sing in praise of you.…
> >
> > Behold, I and the children God has given me."
>
> (Heb. 2:10–13 LEB)

Instead of being embarrassed before the *elohim* of God's council at becoming human—becoming lower than they are—Jesus revels in it. It was all part of a grand strategy. Standing in the council ("in the assembly") he presents us: *Behold—look at me, and the children God has given me. We are all together now—forever.* And that had been the plan from the beginning.

Our entrance into God's divine, glorified family is our destiny. Paul puts in beautifully in Romans 8:18–23:

> For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God.… And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.

Paul encouraged believers with the same message. He told the Roman believers they were "predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, so that he should be the firstborn among many brothers" (Rom. 8:29 LEB).

He told the Corinthian church, "We all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another" (2 Cor. 3:18), and that our humanity would be transformed, "for this perishable body must put on the imperishable, and this mortal body must put on immortality" (1 Cor. 15:53). For Peter, joining God's family council meant becoming "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet. 1:4). John said it most simply: "We shall be like him" (1 John 3:2).

Why This Matters

As Christians, we've probably heard many times that we need to be like Jesus. We certainly do. But when we hear that, we tend to process it *only* in terms of being good, or maybe "less bad." We turn what's actually a nearly inconceivable idea—that we will one day be as Jesus is—into a performance obligation.

Rather than feel guilty about how much we aren't like Jesus, and pledge in our hearts to "do better," we need to let the blessing of what he did, and will do, rewire the way we think about being like him. We can turn Christlikeness into a task we must perform lest God be angry with us, but that's bad theology. It turns grace into duty. Or we can be grateful that one day we will be what God is *thrilled* to make us—what he predestined us to be (Rom. 8:29)—and live in such a way that people enslaved to dark powers will want to join us in God's family. One perspective looks inward; the other looks heavenward.

The Christian life *now* is not about the fear that we will fail to keep happy the One who loved us while we were still enslaved to darkness. The Christian life is really about grasping two concepts: our *adoption* into God's family—which means Jesus is our brother, and that God loves us like he loves Jesus—and our purpose in God's plan to restore his kingdom on earth. We are, and will be, *God's new divine council*. He is our Father. We are his children, destined to live where he lives forever. We are his coworkers, tasked with helping him release those still owned by the lord of the dead and held captive by unseen powers of darkness.

That is what the Bible is about, from Eden to Eden. *That* is your destiny. Your life now is not about earning your place in God's family. That cannot

be earned. It's a gift. Your life now is showing appreciation for your adoption, enjoying it, and getting others to share it with you.

CHAPTER **SIXTEEN**

Ruling over Angels

It's crucial to our faith that we understand who we are as Christians. We are the sons and daughters of God, a re-fashioned divine council that already participates in our Father's kingdom. But there's more to it than that. Yes, we are God's family council—but to what end?

While we are already in the kingdom (Col. 1:13), we have not yet seen the full unveiling of that kingdom—we have not seen the world become Eden. This "already, but not yet" paradox runs throughout the Bible in many ways. In this chapter, I want to give you a glimpse of the "not yet" that answers the question "To what end?"

Kingdom Participation Now

Our participation in God's kingdom isn't predetermined, in this sense: We are not mere robots performing functions programmed for us. That violates the whole idea of being God's imager, his representative. We were created to be like him. He is free. If we do not have genuine freedom, we cannot be like him—by definition, we would *not* be like him. We are free to obey and worship, or rebel and indulge ourselves. And we will reap what we sow. Our sowing is not programmed.

But God is greater than we are. He had a plan and it will come to pass. Its success neither depends on nor is forced to adapt to human freedom. We cannot undermine it—nor can the divine beings who are also free to choose.

Think about the heavenly council meeting I showed you in chapter 1. I asked whether you believed the things the Bible says, and then took you to a meeting of God and his heavenly council in 1 Kings 22. God had decreed (and so it must happen) that it was time for wicked Ahab to die. But God

then let the spirit beings in his council decide how to accomplish that (1 Kings 22:19–23).

Predestination and freedom work hand-in-hand in God's kingdom rule. His purposes will never be overturned or halted. He is able to take sin and rebellion and still accomplish—through other free representatives—what he desires. As C. S. Lewis once said of God (in the book *Perelandra*), "Whatever you do, He will make good of it. But not the good He had prepared for you if you had obeyed him."

To what end, here and now, are we God's family council? To participate with God in liberating people from darkness. To show people how to live justly and with mercy—imitating God for those who need the illustration. To defend and spread truth about the true God in a hostile world under the dominion of envious divine intelligences. To enjoy life as God intended it.

All these callings are training for the kingdom to come. As Paul asked the Corinthians, who had lost a divine perspective while bickering about the affairs of this world, "Do you not know that we are to judge [rule] angels?" (1 Cor. 6:3). He was serious. Paul was getting at something specific in that statement.

Set over the Nations

The final form of the kingdom is yet to come. When it does, the powers of darkness will be defeated. The demonic gods will lose their dominion over the nations permanently—*replaced by God's glorified human family and council*. Look at what Jesus said in the book of Revelation:

> Hold fast what you have until I come. The one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, to him I will give authority over the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron, as when earthen pots are broken in pieces, even as I myself have received authority from my Father. And I will give him the morning star. (Rev. 2:25–28)

When Jesus returns to take his throne on a new earth—a new, global Eden—he will share it with his siblings. The principalities and powers will

be thrown off their thrones, and we will take their place. Their dominions won't be given to angels faithful to God—*we will outrank the angels* in God's final Edenic kingdom. Jesus will put his human brothers and sisters in charge.

Are you puzzled by that final statement in Revelation 2:28? "I will give him the morning star"? It does sound odd, but it speaks of our joint rule with Jesus over the nations after the evil powers are dealt with. "Morning star" is used to describe divine beings (Job 38:7). It is also a messianic term. Since the messiah is divine, "star language" was sometimes used to describe his coming reign. Numbers 24:17 says "A star will go out from Jacob, and a scepter will rise from Israel" (LEB). In the book of Revelation, Jesus describes himself this way: "I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star" (Rev. 22:16 LEB).

The wording of Revelation 2:25–28 is powerful. Not only does Jesus *say* he is the messianic morning star, but he *gives* to us the morning star—he shares his messianic rule with us. Revelation 3:20–21 takes it one step further so believers don't miss the point:

> Behold, I stand at the door and knock! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, indeed I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me. The one who conquers, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also have conquered and have sat down with my Father on his throne. (Rev. 3:20–21 LEB)

To what end have we been made partakers of the divine nature? Why does Jesus introduce us in the council as his brothers and sisters? *So that God can give us the dominion over the earth he originally desired*. Heaven will return to earth in a new, global Eden.

Eternal Eden

From the first chapters of Genesis, Eden was a focal point of God's plan for man, the rest of his divine imagers, and his kingdom. So it's neither a surprise nor a coincidence that the last chapter of the book of Revelation takes us back to Eden:

> Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city; also, on either side of the river, the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit each month. The leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations. No longer will there be anything accursed, but the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And night will be no more. They will need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever. (Rev. 22:1–5)

Did you notice that the Tree of Life heals the nations? The nations, once dominated by principalities and powers, will be ruled by the new sons and daughters of God—*you and me*.

This wasn't the first time the Tree of Life showed up in Revelation. Speaking to those who believe unto the end, Jesus said in Revelation 2:7, 11, "I will grant [them] to eat of the tree of life, which is in the paradise of God … [They] will not be hurt by the second death." The reference to the Tree of Life is clearly Edenic. The first death refers to physical death, brought by Adam's sin and expulsion from Eden. Since all humans, believers and unbelievers alike, are resurrected before judgment, the second death is the final judgment (Rev. 21:8). Those who continue to live with God in a new Eden do not suffer the second death.

Why This Matters

Many Christians have an inadequate view of the afterlife. Scripture doesn't tell us everything about what it will be like, but some aspects are certain. We aren't going to be playing harps or singing endlessly while floating around on clouds. We won't just be sitting on celestial couches chatting with departed loved ones or well-known believers from the past.

Rather, we will be living the life Eden offered—we will be busy enjoying and caring for what God has made, side by side with the divine

beings who remained loyal to him. Heaven and earth will no longer be separate places.

Knowing our destiny ought to mold our thinking in the here and now. As Paul said, "What no one ever saw or heard, what no one ever thought could happen, is the very thing God prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor. 2:9 GNT). Knowing this spectacular, glorious outcome helps keep our present circumstances in perspective. After Paul wrote the words we just read, he said this in his second letter to the Corinthians:

> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our affliction.… For we do not want you to be unaware, brothers, of the affliction we experienced in Asia. For we were so utterly burdened beyond our strength that we despaired of life itself. Indeed, we felt that we had received the sentence of death. But that was to make us rely not on ourselves but on God who raises the dead. (2 Cor. 1:3–9, emphasis added)

God can preserve us in life. But even in death, we will be raised to sit with Jesus on his throne (Rev. 3:21).

We either live with our destination in view, or we don't. And our awareness of our destiny ought to alter our behavior. If you knew you'd someday be sharing an apartment or working in the same office as that person you criticize, belittle, and otherwise disdain, you'd invest a little more effort into being a peacemaker, an encourager, and perhaps even a friend to that person. How is it that we treat fellow believers so poorly, then? How is it that we don't put as much energy into moving the unbeliever toward Jesus as we do into engaging with him or her as an enemy? We either have eternity in view, or we don't.

How much rule does Jesus need to share with you to keep you happy? The question might seem odd, since *any* such gift from Jesus would be wonderful. Why, then, do we vie with believers for status? Why do we bicker with each other for advantage, attention, and personal gain? Are we no better than the Corinthians, whom Paul had to remind of their destiny? We're either content to rule and reign with him, or we're not.

Christian, it’s time to live as though you know who you are and know the plans God has for you.

Conclusion

We've come to the end of our journey. But it's probably better to say that we've only just begun. We've considered some fundamental questions: *Do other gods exist? If they do, does that make much difference in how we understand the Bible? What does it mean for our faith if we presume the unseen world described in the Bible is actually real—not just the familiar and accepted parts, but the unusual and often-ignored parts?* Once I started catching the drift of the supernatural plotline of Scripture, I realized I needed to think differently about all sorts of things. But I can sum them up in two words: *identity* and *purpose*. I hope you have been challenged in both of those areas as you've read this book.

Our Identity—We Have a Home in the Family of God

What this book has discussed has significant implications for how we perceive what it means to be a Christian—to be "in Christ," as the New Testament so often puts it. Once we realize the gods of the Old Testament are real, then the meaning of God's command to have no other god before Yahweh, the God of Israel, comes into focus. The command isn't about not giving attention to money or boats or cars. It's about God's jealous love for his people. In other words, *the command actually means what it says*. The insanity of loyalty to any god other than the God of all gods is hard to miss.

The awfulness of living with the consequences of how God judged the gods and their people (the "nations") is also pretty obvious. We were once *disinherited*, enslaved to the corruption and exploitation of other gods. We were, as Paul says, alienated from God and outsiders to his covenant love

(Eph. 2:12). We were lost, enslaved to darkness, enemies of God in the service to unseen overlords (Eph. 4:18; Col. 1:21).

Having a grasp of that situation makes doctrinal concepts like *adoption* and *inheritance* more meaningful. It gives them context. God was unwilling to void the plan of living on earth with his family, enjoying the created world that came from his own hand. Yes, at Babel he turned his back on humanity, but in the next moment, he called Abraham to raise up a new family—and to be the conduit through which those disinherited could find their way back to him (Acts 10:26–27).

Embracing the supernatural reality of the spiritual world of the Bible is essential for understanding the Bible. It explains why, as the Old Testament moves forward, the sin of idolatry will not just be like any other sin. It will be *the* sin. Israel was created to be loyal to God; when she turned to other gods instead, she was sent into exile, cast off like the other nations. This is a central reason why salvation in the Bible is always described in terms of *faith*. God is not ultimately looking for better behavior. He is looking for faith—for *believing loyalty*. When we choose to align our hearts with the God of gods, he will save us. When we choose another, we are sowing what we will one day reap.

For us today, believing loyalty means embracing what Jesus did on the cross, because he was God in flesh. Our ethics and behavior (our works) aren't about becoming loyal enough for God to embrace us. We follow his commands because we've already chosen him. And his commands will lead to our happiness and contentment because they steer us away from the destruction of self and others. They provide a glimpse of life in harmony with God and the rest of his family—our family—seen and unseen, in his kingdom, the new Eden.

Our Purpose—We All Play a Part in God's Plan to Restore Eden

Membership in God's family has only one condition: unswerving faith in the God of gods, come to us in the person of Jesus Christ. That membership

not only bestows wonderful privileges, but also provides us with a clear purpose in life.

The members of God's family have a mission: to be God's agents in restoring his good rule on earth and expanding the membership of his family. We are God's means to propel the great reversal begun in Acts 2, the birth of the church, the body of Christ, until the time when the Lord returns. As evil had spread like a contagion through humanity after the failure of the first Eden, so the gospel spreads like an antidote through the same infected host. We are *carriers* of the truth about the God of gods, his love for *all* nations, and his unchanging desire to dwell with his family in the earthly home he has wanted since its creation. Eden *will* live again.

It's a scientific fact that the world's continents move farther apart every year. But the progression of "continental drift" is undetectable to human senses. We only know it occurs because of observations we can make after the fact. So it is with the steady, unrelenting advance of the kingdom of God. We can't perceive with the naked eye how each day shrinks the domains of the gods, the powers of darkness, or how the gospel liberates, one by one, those held under dominion. But it is an *indiscernible certainty*.

The key to seeing ourselves in this picture is to firmly grasp that God is still working his plan even when we can't see it. We cannot genuinely claim to believe in the unseen, supernatural world while *not* believing that God's intelligent providence is active in our lives and the affairs of human history. *God wants us to live intentionally*—believing that his unseen hand and the invisible agents loyal to him and us (Heb. 1:14) are engaged in our circumstances so that, together, God's goal of a global Eden moves unstoppably onward.

Each of us is vital to someone's path to the kingdom and the defense of that kingdom. Each day affords us contact with people under the dominion of darkness and opportunities to encourage each other in the hard task of fulfilling our purpose in an imperfect world. *Everything we do and say matters*, though we may never know why or how. But our job isn't to see—it's to do. Walking by faith isn't passive—it's purposeful.

Bible References

Dedication

1 Samuel 1:1–15 There was a certain man from Ramathaim Zophim, from
the hill country of Ephraim, whose name was Elkanah the son of Jeroham,
the son of Elihu, the son of Tohu, the son of Zuph, an Ephraimite. [2] He had
two wives; the name of the first *was* Hannah, and the name of the second
was Peninnah. Now Peninnah had children, but Hannah had no children. [3]
Now this man used to go up from his town year by year to worship and to
sacrifice to Yahweh of hosts in Shiloh, where the two sons of Eli, Hophni
and Phinehas, *were* priests to Yahweh. [4] On the day Elkanah sacrificed, he
would give portions to his wife Peninnah and to all her sons and daughters.
[5] But to Hannah he would give a double portion, because he loved Hannah,
though Yahweh had closed her womb. [6] (Now her rival wife would provoke
her severely in order to upset her because Yahweh had closed her womb.) [7]
And so he used to do year after year; whenever she went up to the house of
Yahweh, she would provoke her so that she would weep and would not eat.
[8] So Elkanah her husband would say to her: “Hannah, why do you weep and
why do you not eat? And why are you heartsick? Am I not better to you
than ten sons?” [9] Then Hannah got up after eating and drinking at Shiloh.
(Now Eli the priest *was* sitting on his chair by the doorpost of the temple of
Yahweh.) [10] She *was* deeply troubled, so she prayed to Yahweh and wept
bitterly. [11] She made a vow and said: “O Yahweh of hosts, if you will look
with compassion on the misery of your female servant, and will remember
me, and not forget your female servant, and will give to your female servant
a male child then I will give him to Yahweh all the days of his life, and a
razor will never pass over his head.” [12] While she continued to pray before
Yahweh, Eli was observing her mouth. [13] Now Hannah had been speaking in
her heart; her lips *were* moving, but her voice could not be heard, so Eli
considered her *to be* drunk. [14] Then Eli said to her, “How long will you
behave like someone *who is* drunk? Put away your wine!” [15] But Hannah
answered and said, “No, my lord. I am a woman deeply distressed, but I
have not drunk wine *or* strong drink. *Rather*, I have poured out my soul
before Yahweh.

Chapter One: Believing the Bible

1 Kings 22:19–23 And he said, “Therefore, hear the word of Yahweh. I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne with all the hosts of heaven standing beside him from his right hand and from his left *hand*. [20] And Yahweh said, ‘Who will entice Ahab so that he will go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?’ Then this one was saying one thing and the other one was saying another. [21] Then a spirit came out and stood before Yahweh and said, ‘I will entice him,’ and Yahweh said to him, ‘How?’ [22] He said, ‘I will go out and I will be a false spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And he said, ‘You shall entice and succeed, go out and do so.’ [23] So then, see that Yahweh has placed a false spirit in the mouth of all of these your prophets, and Yahweh has spoken disaster concerning you.”

Jude 6 And *the* angels who did not keep to their own domain but deserted their proper dwelling place, he has kept in eternal bonds under deep gloom for the judgment of the great day,

1 Peter 3:18–22 For Christ also suffered once for sins,

the just for the unjust,

in order that he could bring you to God,

being put to death in the flesh,

but made alive in the spirit,

[19] in which also he went *and* proclaimed to the spirits in prison,

[20] who were formerly disobedient, when the patience of God waited in the days of Noah, *while* an ark was being constructed, in which a few—that is, eight souls—were rescued through water. [21] And also, corresponding to *this*, baptism now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, [22] who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him.

1 Peter 3:18–20 For Christ also suffered once for sins,

the just for the unjust,

in order that he could bring you to God,
being put to death in the flesh,
but made alive in the spirit,
19 in which also he went *and* proclaimed to the spirits in prison,

20 who were formerly disobedient, when the patience of God waited in the days of Noah, *while* an ark was being constructed, in which a few—that is, eight souls—were rescued through water.

1 Corinthians 6:3 Do you not know that we will judge angels, not to mention ordinary matters?

Matthew 6:10 May your kingdom come,
may your will be done
on earth as *it is* in heaven.

2 Kings 6:8–22 The king of Aram was fighting with Israel, so he consulted with his officers, saying, "My camp is at such and such a place." 9 Then the man of God sent to the king of Israel, saying, "Take care while crossing over to this place, because *the* Arameans *are* descending there." 10 So the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God said to him and warned him, so he was on guard there continually.

11 Then the heart of the king of Aram was stormy because of this matter, so he called his servants and said to them, "Can you not tell me who among us sides with the king of Israel?" 12 Then one of his servants said, "No, my lord the king, but Elisha the prophet who is *in* Israel tells the king of Israel things that you speak in your own bedchamber." 13 Then he said, "Go and see where he *is* so that I can send and capture him." Then he was told to him, "Look, *he is* in Dothan." 14 So he sent horses, chariots, and an oppressing army there. They arrived at night and surrounded the town. 15 The attendant of the man of God arose early and went out, and look, the army *was* surrounding the city with horses and chariots. His servant said to him, "Oh no, my master! What shall we do?" 16 And he said, "Don't be afraid, for more *are* with us than are with them." 17 Then Elisha prayed and said, "O Yahweh, please open his eyes that he may see," and Yahweh opened the eyes of the servant, and he saw, and look, the mountain *was* full of horses and chariots of fire all around Elisha. 18 They came down to him,

and Elisha prayed to Yahweh and said, “Please strike this people with blindness,” so he struck them with blindness as Elisha had spoken. [19] Then Elisha said to them, “This *is* not the way and this *is* not the city. Come after me, and I will bring you to the man whom you seek.” Then he brought them to Samaria.

[20] It happened at the moment they came to Samaria, Elisha said, “O Yahweh, open the eyes of these that they may see,” so Yahweh opened their eyes, and they saw, and look, the middle of Samaria! [21] Then the king of Israel said to Elisha when he saw them, “Shall I kill them? Shall I kill, my father?” [22] And he said, “You shall not kill. Would you kill *those* whom you took captive with the sword or with the bow? Put food and water before them that they may eat and drink and then go to their master.”

Chapter Two: The Unseen Realm: God and the Gods

Ecclesiastes 3:11 He has made everything suitable in its time. He also has put the past in their hearts, yet no one can grasp what God does from the beginning to the end.

Romans 1:18–23 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all impiety and unrighteousness of people, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness, [19] because what can be known about God is evident among them, for God made *it* clear to them. [20] For from the creation of the world, his invisible *attributes*, both his eternal power and deity, are discerned clearly, being understood in the things created, so that they are without excuse. [21] For *although they* knew God, they did not honor *him* as God or give thanks, but they became futile in their reasoning, and their senseless hearts were darkened. [22] Claiming to be wise, they became fools, [23] and exchanged the glory of the immortal God with the likeness of an image of mortal human beings and birds and quadrupeds and reptiles.

Romans 1:18 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all impiety and unrighteousness of people, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness,

Psalm 89:5–7 And *so the* heavens will praise your wonderful deed, O Yahweh,

even your faithfulness, in *the* assembly of *the* holy ones.

[6] For who in the sky is equal to Yahweh?

Who is like Yahweh among the sons of God,

[7] a God feared greatly in the council of *the* holy ones,

and awesome above all surrounding him?

Daniel 7:10 A stream of fire issued forth and flowed from his presence; thousands *upon* thousands served him and ten thousand *upon* ten thousand stood before him. The judge sat, and *the* books were opened.

Psalm 82:1 God stands in the divine assembly;

he administers judgment in the midst of *the* gods.

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he administers judgment in the midst of *the* gods.

Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth—

Deuteronomy 32:17 They sacrificed to the demons, not God,

to gods whom they had not known,

new *gods who* came from recent times;

their ancestors had not known them.

1 Samuel 28:13 The king said to her, “Do not be afraid! What do you see?” And the woman said to Saul, “I see a god coming up from the ground!”

Psalm 29:1 Ascribe to Yahweh, O sons of God,

ascribe to Yahweh glory and strength.

Psalm 95:3 For Yahweh *is the* great God,

and *the* great king over all gods,

Psalm 148:1–5 Praise Yah.

Praise Yahweh from the heavens;

praise him in the heights.

[2] Praise him, all his angels;

praise him, all his hosts.

[3] Praise him, sun and moon;
praise him, all stars of light.
[4] Praise him, highest heavens,
and waters above the heavens.
[5] Let them praise the name of Yahweh,
because he commanded and they were created.

Psalm 89:6–7 For who in the sky is equal to Yahweh?
Who is like Yahweh among the sons of God,
[7] a God feared greatly in the council of *the* holy ones,
and awesome above all surrounding him?

1 Kings 8:23 and he said, "O Yahweh, God of Israel, there is no god like you in the heavens above or on the earth beneath, keeping the covenant and the loyal love for your servants who are walking before you with all their heart.

Psalm 97:9 For you, O Yahweh, *are* most high over all the earth.
You are highly exalted above all gods.

Deuteronomy 10:17 For Yahweh your God, he *is* God of the gods and Lord of the lords, the great and mighty God, the awesome *one* who is not partial, and he does not take bribes.

Psalm 136:2 Give thanks to the God of gods,
for his loyal love *endures* forever.

Psalm 82:1 God stands in the divine assembly;
he administers judgment in the midst of *the* gods.

Psalm 82:6 I have said, "You *are* gods,
and sons of the Most High, all of you.

Job 1:6 And it happened one day that the sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh, and Satan also came into their midst.

Job 2:1 And then one day the sons of God came to present themselves before Yahweh, and Satan also came into their midst to present himself before Yahweh.

Job 38:7 when *the* morning stars were singing together

and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Daniel 4:24 This *is* the explanation, O king, and it *is* a decree of the Most High that has come upon my lord the king:

Daniel 4:17 The sentence *is* by *the* decree of *the* watchers,

and the decision *by the* command of *the* holy *ones*,

in order that the living will know

that the Most High *is* sovereign over *the* kingdom of humankind,

and to whomever he wills he gives it,

and he *even* sets *the* humblest of men over it."

Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of heaven, and over every animal that moves upon the earth."

Chapter Three: Once and Future Kings

Genesis 2:15–25 And Yahweh God took the man and set him in the garden
of Eden to cultivate it and to keep it. [16] And Yahweh God commanded the
man, saying, “From every tree of the garden you may freely eat, [17] but from
the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day
that you eat from it you shall surely die.”

[18] Then Yahweh God said, “*it is* not good *that* the man is alone. I will
make for him a helper as his counterpart.” [19] And out of the ground Yahweh
God formed every beast of the field and every bird of the sky, and he
brought *each* to the man to see what he would call it. And whatever the man
called that living creature *was* its name. [20] And the man gave names to every
domesticated animal and to the birds of heaven and to all the wild animals.
But for *the* man there was not found a helper as his counterpart. [21] And
Yahweh God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man. While he slept, he
took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh where it had been. [22] And
Yahweh God fashioned the rib which he had taken from the man into a
woman and brought her to the man. [23] And the man said,

“She is now bone from my bones
and flesh from my flesh;
she shall be called ‘Woman,’
for she was taken from man.”

[24] Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and shall cling to his
wife, and they shall be as one flesh. [25] And the man and his wife, both of
them, were naked, and they were not ashamed.

Ezekiel 28:13 You were in Eden, the garden of God,
and every precious stone *was* your adornment:
carnelian, topaz and moonstone,

turquoise, onyx and jasper,
sapphire, malachite and emerald.
And gold *was* the craftsmanship of your settings
and your mountings in you;
on the day when you were created they were prepared.
Ezekiel 31:8–9 Cedars in the garden of God
could not *be* equal to it;
fir trees could not resemble its branches,
and plane trees were not *even* like its branches;
any tree *even* in the garden of God
could not resemble it in its beauty.
[9] I made it beautiful with the abundance of its branches,
and all of the trees of Eden that *were* in the garden of God envied it.'
"

Ezekiel 28:14 You were *an* anointed guardian cherub,
and I placed you on God's holy mountain;
you walked in the midst of stones of fire.

Genesis 1:26 And God said, "Let us make humankind in our image and according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth."

Genesis 1:27 So God created humankind in his image, in the likeness of God he created him, male and female he created them.

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Genesis 1:26 And God said, "Let us make humankind in our image and according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth."

Genesis 1:26–27 And God said, "Let us make humankind in our image and according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and

over the birds of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth." [27] So God created humankind in his image, in the likeness of God he created him, male and female he created them.

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Colossians 1:15 who is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation,

Hebrews 1:3 who is the radiance of his glory and the representation of his essence, sustaining all *things* by the word of power. *When he* had made purification for sins through him, he sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high,

Romans 8:29 because *those* whom he foreknew, he also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, so that he should be the firstborn among many brothers.

2 Corinthians 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory into glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

Genesis 1:28 And God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of heaven, and over every animal that moves upon the earth."

Romans 6:23 For the compensation due sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

John 1:12 But as many as received him—to those who believe in his name —he gave to them authority to become children of God,

John 11:52 and not for the nation only, but also that the children of God who are scattered would be gathered into one.)

Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,

1 John 3:1–3 See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called children of God, and we are! Because of this the world does not know us: because it did not know him. [2] Dear friends, now we are

children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. [3] And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as that one is pure.

Galatians 4:5–6 in order that he might redeem those under the law, in order that we might receive the adoption. [6] And because you are sons, God sent out the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying out, "Abba! (Father!),"

Romans 8:14–16 For all those who are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. [15] For you have not received a spirit of slavery *leading* to fear again, but you have received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba! Father!" [16] The Spirit himself confirms to our spirit that we are children of God,

Galatians 4:7 so that you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, also an heir through God.

Titus 3:7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we may become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

James 2:5 Listen, my dear brothers! Did not God choose the poor of the world *to be* rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom that he has promised to those who love him?

2 Peter 1:4 through which things he has bestowed on us his precious and very great promises, so that through these you may become sharers of the divine nature *after* escaping from the corruption *that is* in the world because of evil desire,

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is.

Revelation 2:7 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will grant to him to eat from the tree of life which is in the paradise of God.'

Revelation 2:26–28 And the one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, I will give him authority over the nations, [27] and "he will shepherd them with an iron rod; he will break *them* in pieces like jars made of clay," [28] as I also have received from my Father, and I will give him the morning star.

Revelation 3:21 The one who conquers, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also have conquered and have sat down with my Father on his throne.

Genesis 1:26–28 And God said, “Let us make humankind in our image and according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth.” [27] So God created humankind in his image, in the likeness of God he created him, male and female he created them. [28] And God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of heaven, and over every animal that moves upon the earth.”

Genesis 8:17 Bring out with you all the living things which *are* with you, from all the living creatures—birds, and animals, and everything that creeps on the earth, and let them swarm on the earth and be fruitful and multiply on the earth.”

Genesis 9:1 And God blessed Noah and his sons, and said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth.

Chapter Four: Divine Rebellions

Genesis 1:26 And God said, “Let us make humankind in our image and according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth.”

Genesis 1:26–28 And God said, “Let us make humankind in our image and according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth.” [27] So God created humankind in his image, in the likeness of God he created him, male and female he created them. [28] And God blessed them, and God said to them, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it, and rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of heaven, and over every animal that moves upon the earth.”

Genesis 1:22 And God blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let the birds multiply on the earth.”

Genesis 1:26 And God said, “Let us make humankind in our image and according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth.”

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Revelation 12:7–12 And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. [8] And they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them *any* longer in heaven. [9] And the great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

[10] And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying,

“Now the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his Christ have come,
because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down,
the one who accuses them before our God day and night.
[11] And they conquered him by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony,
and they did not love their lives until death.
[12] Because of this, rejoice, you heavens,
and those who live in them!
Woe *to* the earth and *to* the sea,
because the devil has come down to you,
having great anger,
because he knows that he has little time!”

Revelation 12:7–9 And there was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon, and the dragon and his angels fought back. [8] And they did not prevail, nor was a place found for them *any* longer in heaven. [9] And the great dragon was thrown down, the ancient serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world. He was thrown down to the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him.

Revelation 12:4–5 And his tail swept away a third of the stars from heaven and threw them to the earth. And the dragon stood before the woman who was about to give birth, in order that whenever she gave birth to her child he could devour *it*. [5] And she gave birth to a son, a male *child*, who is going to shepherd all the nations with an iron rod, and her child was snatched away to God and to his throne.

Revelation 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying,

“Now the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God
and the authority of his Christ have come,
because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down,

the one who accuses them before our God day and night.
Isaiah 14:13 And you yourself said in your heart,

‘I will ascend *to* heaven;
I will raise up my throne above the stars of God;
and I will sit on *the* mountain of assembly
on the summit of Zaphon;
Ezekiel 28:14–16 You were *an* anointed guardian cherub,
and I placed you on God’s holy mountain;
you walked in the midst of stones of fire.
15 You *were* blameless in your ways
from the day when you were created,
until wickedness was found in you.
16 In the abundance of your trading,
they filled the midst of you *with* violence, and you sinned;
and I cast you as a profane thing from the mountain of God,
and I expelled you, *the* guardian cherub,
from the midst of *the* stones of fire.
Isaiah 14:12 How you have fallen from heaven, morning star, son of dawn!
You are cut down to the ground, conqueror of nations!
Genesis 3:14–15 Then Yahweh God said to the serpent,

“Because you have done this,
you *will be* cursed
more than any domesticated animal
and more than any wild animal.
On your belly you shall go
and dust you shall eat
all the days of your life.
15 And I will put hostility
between you and between the woman,

and between your offspring and between her offspring;
he will strike you *on the* head,
and you will strike him *on the* heel."

John 8:44 You are of your father the devil, and you want to do the desires of your father! That one was a murderer from the beginning, and does not stand firm in the truth, because truth is not in him. Whenever he speaks the lie, he speaks from his own *nature*, because he is a liar and the father of lies.

John 6:70 Jesus replied to them, "Did I not choose you, the twelve, and one of you is the devil?"

1 John 3:12 not as Cain, who was of the evil one and violently murdered his brother. And for what reason did he violently murder him? Because his deeds were evil and the *deeds* of his brother *were* righteous.

Genesis 6:5 And Yahweh saw that the evil of humankind *was* great upon the earth, and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart *was* always only evil.

Genesis 6:5 And Yahweh saw that the evil of humankind *was* great upon the earth, and every inclination of the thoughts of his heart *was* always only evil.

Genesis 6:1–4 And it happened *that*, when humankind began to multiply on the face of the ground, daughters were born to them. [2] Then the sons of God saw the daughters of humankind, that they *were* beautiful. And they took for themselves wives from all that they chose. [3] And Yahweh said, "My Spirit shall not abide with humankind forever in that he *is* also flesh. And his days *shall be* one hundred and twenty years." [4] The Nephilim *were* upon the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God went into the daughters of humankind, and they bore children to them. These *were* the mighty warriors that *were* from ancient times, men of renown.

2 Peter 2:4–6 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but held *them* captive in Tartarus with chains of darkness *and* handed *them* over to be kept for judgment, [5] and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a proclaimer of righteousness, and seven others *when he* brought a flood on the world of the ungodly, [6] and condemned the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to destruction, reducing them to ashes, having appointed *them as* an example for those who are going to be ungodly,

Jude 5–6 Now I want to remind you, *although* you know everything once and for all, that Jesus, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, the second time destroyed those who did not believe. [6] And *the* angels who did not keep to their own domain but deserted their proper dwelling place, he has kept in eternal bonds under deep gloom for the judgment of the great day,

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Numbers 13:32–33 And they presented the report of the land that they explored to the Israelites, saying, "The land that we went through to explore *is* a land that eats its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in its midst *are* men of great size. [33] There we saw the Nephilim (the descendants of Anak *came* from the Nephilim), and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their eyes."

Deuteronomy 2:10–11 (The Emim previously lived in it, a people large, numerous, and tall, like the Anakites. [11] They were reckoned also *as* Rephaim as the Anakites *were*; but the Moabites called them Emim.

Isaiah 14:9–11 Sheol below is getting excited over you,

to meet you when you come;

it arouses *the* dead spirits for you,

all of *the* leaders of *the* earth.

It raises all of *the* kings of *the* nations from their thrones.

[10] All of them will respond and say to you,

'You yourself also were made weak like us!

You have become the same as us!'

[11] Your pride is brought down *to* Sheol,

and the sound of your harps;
maggots are spread out beneath you like a bed,
and your covering is worms.

Genesis 6:1–4 And it happened *that*, when humankind began to multiply on the face of the ground, daughters were born to them. [2] Then the sons of God saw the daughters of humankind, that they *were* beautiful. And they took for themselves wives from all that they chose. [3] And Yahweh said, "My Spirit shall not abide with humankind forever in that he *is* also flesh. And his days *shall be* one hundred and twenty years." [4] The Nephilim *were* upon the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God went into the daughters of humankind, and they bore children to them. These *were* the mighty warriors that *were* from ancient times, men of renown.

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daughters of humankind, and they bore children to them. These *were* the mighty warriors that *were* from ancient times, men of renown.

2 Samuel 21:15–22 There *was* war again for *the* Philistines with Israel, and David and his servants with him went down, and they fought *the* Philistines, and David grew weary. [16] Now Yishbi in Nob, who *was* among the descendents of Raphah (now the weight of his spearhead *was* three hundredweight of bronze, and he *was* newly armed), said that he would kill David. [17] But Abishai the son of Zeruiah helped him, and he attacked the Philistine and killed him. Then the men of David swore to him, saying, "You shall not go out with us any longer to the battle, so that you do not quench the lamp of Israel."

[18] It happened afterward that there *was* again battle at Gob with *the* Philistines. Then Sibbecai the Hushathite killed Saph who *was* among the descendants of the Raphah.

[19] There *was* again a battle with *the* Philistines at Gob. And Elhanan the son of Jaare-Oregim, the Bethlehemite, killed Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear *was* like the beam of a weaver.

[20] Once again there *was* battle at Gath, and there *was* a man of great size. The fingers of his hand and the toes of his feet *were* six and six, twenty-four in number. He *was* also born to the Raphah. [21] He taunted Israel but Jonathan the son of Shimei, the brother of David, killed him. [22] These four *were* born for the Raphah in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

1 Samuel 23:1–14 Now they told David, "Look, *the* Philistines *are* fighting in Keilah and they *are* raiding the threshing floors." [2] So David inquired of Yahweh, saying, "Shall I go and attack these Philistines?" And Yahweh said to David, "Go and attack the Philistines and save Keilah." [3] But David's men said to him, "Look, we *are* afraid here in Judah. How much more *if* we go *to* Keilah to the battle lines of *the* Philistines?" [4] So David again inquired of Yahweh, and Yahweh answered him and said, "Get up, go down *to* Keilah, for I *am* giving *the* Philistines into your hand." [5] So David and his men went to Keilah and fought with *the* Philistines. They drove off their livestock and dealt them a heavy blow. So David saved the inhabitants of Keilah.

[6] Now when Abiathar the son of Ahimelech fled to David *at* Keilah, he went
down *with* an ephod in his hand. [7] When it was told to Saul that David had
gone to Keilah, Saul said, “God has given him into my hand, because he has
shut himself in by going into a city *with* two barred gates. [8] Saul then
summoned all of the army for the battle, to go down *to* Keilah to lay a siege
against David and his men. [9] When David learned that Saul *was* plotting evil
against him, he said to Abiathar the priest, “Bring the ephod here.” [10] And
David said, “O Yahweh, God of Israel, your servant has clearly heard that
Saul *is* seeking to come to Keilah to destroy the city because of me. [11] Will
the rulers of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will Saul come down as your
servant has heard? O Yahweh, God of Israel, please tell your servant!” And
Yahweh said, “He will come down.” [12] Then David said, “Will the rulers of
Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand of Saul?” And Yahweh said,
“They will deliver *you*.” [13] So David and his men got up, about six hundred
men, and went out from Keilah and wandered wherever they could go.
When it was told to Saul that David had escaped from Keilah, he stopped
his pursuit.

[14] David remained in the wilderness, in the strongholds, and in the hill
country in the wilderness of Ziph. And Saul sought him continually, but
God did not give him into his hand.

1 Samuel 23:11–12 Will the rulers of Keilah deliver me into his hand? Will
Saul come down as your servant has heard? O Yahweh, God of Israel,
please tell your servant!” And Yahweh said, “He will come down.” [12] Then
David said, “Will the rulers of Keilah deliver me and my men into the hand
of Saul?” And Yahweh said, “They will deliver *you*.”

Romans 5:6–8 For *while* we were still helpless, yet at the proper time Christ
died for the ungodly. [7] For only rarely will someone die on behalf of a
righteous person (for on behalf of a good person possibly someone might
even dare to die), [8] but God demonstrates his own love for us, *in* that *while*
we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Revelation 7:17 because the Lamb *who is* in the midst of the throne will
shepherd them

and will lead them to springs of living waters,

and God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.”

Revelation 21:4 And he will wipe away every tear from their eyes,
and death will not exist *any* longer,
and mourning or wailing or pain will not exist *any* longer.
The former *things* have passed away."

Chapter Five: Cosmic Geography

Genesis 11:1–9 Now the whole earth *had* one language and the same words.
[2] And as people migrated from the east they found a plain in the land of
Shinar and settled there. [3] And they said to each other, “Come, let us make
bricks and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone and they
had tar for mortar. [4] And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and
a tower whose top *reaches to* the heavens. And let us make a name for
ourselves, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

[5] Then Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower that humankind
was building. [6] And Yahweh said, “Behold, they are one people with one
language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. So now
nothing that they intend to do will be impossible for them. [7] Come, let us go
down and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand
each other’s language.” [8] So Yahweh scattered them from there over the face
of the whole earth, and they stopped building the city. [9] Therefore its name
was called Babel, for there Yahweh confused the language of the whole
earth, and there Yahweh scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

Genesis 11:4 And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a
tower whose top *reaches to* the heavens. And let us make a name for
ourselves, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

Genesis 11:4 And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a
tower whose top *reaches to* the heavens. And let us make a name for
ourselves, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

Genesis 11:7 Come, let us go down and confuse their language there, so that
they will not understand each other’s language.”

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,

at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,

he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,

according to the number of the children of Israel.

[9] For Yahweh’s portion *was* his people,

Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Deuteronomy 32:9 For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,

Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Genesis 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, and those who curse you I will curse. And all families of the earth will be blessed in you."

Acts 17:26–27 And he made from one *man* every nation of humanity to live on all the face of the earth, determining *their* fixed times and the fixed boundaries of their habitation, [27] to search for God, if perhaps indeed they might feel around for him and find *him*. And indeed he is not far away from each one of us,

Deuteronomy 4:19–20 And do this so that you do not lift your eyes *toward* heaven and observe the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heaven, and be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that Yahweh your God has allotted to all *of* the peoples under all *of* the heaven. [20] But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out from the furnace of iron, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to him, as it is this day.

1 Kings 22:19 And he said, "Therefore, hear the word of Yahweh. I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne with all the hosts of heaven standing beside him from his right hand and from his left *hand*.

Acts 17:26–27 And he made from one *man* every nation of humanity to live on all the face of the earth, determining *their* fixed times and the fixed boundaries of their habitation, [27] to search for God, if perhaps indeed they might feel around for him and find *him*. And indeed he is not far away from each one of us,

Psalm 82:1 God stands in the divine assembly;

he administers judgment in the midst of *the* gods.

Psalm 82:2 "How long will you judge unjustly

and show favoritism to the wicked? *Selah*

Psalm 82:5 They do not know or consider.

They go about in the darkness,

so that all *the* foundations of *the* earth are shaken.

Deuteronomy 29:26 And they went and served other gods and bowed down to them, gods whom they did not know them and he had not allotted to them.

Deuteronomy 32:17 They sacrificed to the demons, not God,
to gods whom they had not known,
new *gods who* came from recent times;
their ancestors had not known them.

Psalm 82:6–7 I have said, "You *are* gods,
and sons of the Most High, all of you.
7 However, you will die like men,
and you will fall like one of the princes."

Psalm 82:7 However, you will die like men,
and you will fall like one of the princes."

Isaiah 34:1–4 Come near, nations, to hear;
and peoples, listen attentively!
Let the earth hear, and that which fills it;
the world and all its offspring.
2 For *the* anger of Yahweh *is* against all the nations,
and *his* wrath *is* against all their armies;
he has put them under a ban,
he has given them up for slaughter.
3 And their slain shall be cast out;
as for their corpses, their stench shall go up.
And *the* mountains shall melt with their blood,
4 and all the host of heaven shall rot.
And the skies shall roll up like *a* scroll,
and all their host shall wither
like the withering of a leaf from a vine,
or like *the* withering from a fig tree.

Daniel 10:13 But *the* prince of *the* kingdom of Persia stood before me *for* twenty-one days. And look, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to assist me, and I left *him* there beside *the* king of *the* Persians.

Daniel 10:20–21 Then he asked, “Do you know why I have come to you? And now I return to fight against the prince of Persia and I *myself am* going, and look, *the* prince of Javan will come. [21] However, I will tell you what is inscribed in *the* book of truth, and there is not one *who* contends with me against these *beings* except Michael, your prince.”

1 Samuel 26:19 And so then, please let my lord the king listen to the words of his servant: If Yahweh has incited you against me, may he delight in an offering; but if it is mortals, *may* they be accursed before Yahweh, for they have driven me away today from sharing in the inheritance of Yahweh, saying, 'Go, serve other gods!'

2 Kings 5:15 When he returned to the man of God, he and all of his army, he came and stood before him and said, "Please now, I know that there is no God in all of the world except in Israel. So then, please take a gift from your servant."

Ephesians 1:20–21 which he has worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating *him* at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, [21] above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one,

Ephesians 3:10 in order that the many-sided wisdom of God might be made known now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places* through the church,

Ephesians 6:12 because our struggle is not against blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Colossians 1:16 because all *things* in the heavens and on the earth were created by him, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers, all *things* were created through him and for him,

Colossians 2:15 *When he* had disarmed the rulers and the authorities, he made a display of *them* in public, triumphing over them by it.

1 Corinthians 5:1–13 It is reported everywhere *that there* is sexual immorality among you, and sexual immorality of such a kind which *does* not *even exist* among the Gentiles, so that someone has the wife of *his* father. [2] And you are inflated with pride, and should you not rather have mourned, so that the one who has done this deed would be removed from your midst? [3] For *although I* am absent in body but present in spirit, I have already passed judgment on the one who has done this in this way, as *if I* were present. [4] In the name of our Lord Jesus, *when* you are assembled, and my spirit, together with the power of our Lord Jesus, [5] *I have decided* to

hand over such a person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

[6] Your boasting *is* not good. Do you not know that a little leaven leavens the whole batch of dough? [7] Clean out the old leaven in order that you may be a new batch of dough, just as you are unleavened. For Christ our Passover has been sacrificed. [8] So then, let us celebrate the feast, not with the old leaven or with the leaven of wickedness and sinfulness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

[9] I wrote to you in the letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. [10] By no means *did I mean* the sexually immoral people of this world or the greedy people and swindlers or idolaters, since then you would have to depart out of the world. [11] But now I have written to you not to associate with any so-called brother, if he is a sexually immoral person or a greedy person or an idolater or an abusive person or a drunkard or a swindler—with such a person not even to eat. [12] For what *is it* to me to judge those outside? Should you not judge those inside? [13] But those outside God will judge. Remove the evil person from among yourselves.

1 Corinthians 5:5 *I have decided* to hand over such a person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

2 Corinthians 6:16 And what agreement *does the* temple of God *have* with idols? For we are the temple of the living God, just as God said,

> "I will live in them and will walk about *among them*,
>
> and I will be their God and they will be my people."

Romans 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, this person does not belong to him.

Galatians 3:7 then understand that the ones who have faith, these are sons of Abraham.

Galatians 3:26–29 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, [27] for as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. [28] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. [29] And if you *are* Christ's, then you are descendants of Abraham, heirs according to the promise.

Matthew 18:20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in the midst of them."

Chapter Six: The Word, the Name, and the Angel

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,
at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,
he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,
according to the number of the children of Israel.
[9] For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,
Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Genesis 12:6–7 And Abram traveled through the land up to the place of Shechem, to the Oak of Moreh. Now the Canaanites *were* in the land at that time. [7] And Yahweh appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." And he built an altar there to Yahweh, who had appeared to him.

Genesis 15:1–6 After these things the word of Yahweh came to Abram in a vision, saying: "Do not be afraid, Abram; I *am* your shield, *and* your reward *shall be* very great." [2] Then Abram said, "O Yahweh, my Lord, what will you give me? I continue to be childless, and my heir is Eliezer of Damascus." [3] And Abram said, "Look, you have not given me a descendant, and here, a member of my household *is* my heir." [4] And behold, the word of Yahweh *came* to him saying, "This *person* will not be your heir, but your own son will be your heir." [5] And he brought him outside and said, "Look toward the heavens and count the stars if you are able to count them." And he said to him, "So shall your offspring be." [6] And he believed in Yahweh, and he reckoned it to him *as* righteousness.

Genesis 15:5 And he brought him outside and said, “Look toward the heavens and count the stars if you are able to count them.” And he said to him, “So shall your offspring be.”

Genesis 26:1–5 And there was a famine in the land, besides the former famine which was in the days of Abraham. And Isaac went to Abimelech, king of the Philistines, to Gerar. [2] And Yahweh appeared to him and said, “Do not go down to Egypt; dwell in the land which I will show to you. [3] Dwell as an alien in this land, and I will be with you, and will bless you, for I will give all these lands to you and to your descendants, and I will establish the oath that I swore to Abraham your father. [4] And I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and I will give to your descendants all these lands. And all nations of the earth will be blessed through your offspring, [5] because Abraham listened to my voice and kept my charge: my commandments, my statutes, and my laws.”

Genesis 28:10–22 Then Jacob went out from Beersheba and went to Haran. [11] And he arrived at a *certain* place and spent the night there, because the sun had set. And he took *one* of the stones of the place and put *it* under his head and slept at that place. [12] And he dreamed, and behold, a stairway was set on the earth, and its top touched the heavens. And behold, angels of God *were* going up and going down on it. [13] And behold, Yahweh *was* standing beside him, and he said, “I *am* Yahweh, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The ground on which you *were* sleeping I will give to you and to your descendants. [14] Your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west, and to the east, and to the north and to the south. And all the families of the earth will be blessed through you and through your descendants. [15] Now behold, I *am* with you, and I will keep you wherever you go. And I will bring you to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised to you.” [16] Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, “Surely Yahweh is indeed in this place and I did not know!” [17] Then he was afraid and said, “How awesome *is* this place! This is nothing else than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!” [18] And Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up *as* a stone pillar, and poured oil on top of it. [19] And he called the name of that place Bethel; however, the name of the city *was* formerly Luz. [20] And Jacob made a vow saying, “If God will

be with me and protect me on this way that I am going, and gives me food to eat and clothing to wear, [21] and *if* I return in peace to the house of my father, then Yahweh will become my God. [22] And this stone that I have set up *as* a pillar shall be the house of God, and *of* all that you give to me I will certainly give a tenth to you."

Genesis 31:11–12 Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I *am*.' [12] And he said, 'Lift up your eyes and see—all the rams mounting the flock *are* streaked, speckled, and dappled, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you.

Genesis 32:24–30 And Jacob remained alone, and a man wrestled with him until the breaking of the dawn. [25] And when he saw that he could not prevail against him, he struck his hip socket, so that Jacob's hip socket was sprained as he wrestled with him. [26] Then he said, "Let me go, for dawn is breaking." But he answered, "I will not let you go unless you bless me." [27] Then he said to him, "What *is* your name?" And he said, "Jacob." [28] And he said, "Your name shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed." [29] Then Jacob asked and said, "Please tell me your name." And he said, "Why do you ask this—for my name?" And he blessed him there. [30] Then Jacob called the name of the place Peniel *which means* "I have seen God face to face and my life was spared."

1 Samuel 3:10 Then Yahweh came and stood *there* and called out as before, "Samuel! Samuel!" And Samuel said, "Speak, because your servant *is* listening."

1 Samuel 3:19 And Samuel grew up, and Yahweh was with him. He did not allow any of his prophecies to go unfulfilled.

Jeremiah 1:1–9 The words of Jeremiah, the son of Hilkiah, among the priests who *were* in Anathoth, in the land of Benjamin, [2] *to* whom the word of Yahweh came in the days of Josiah the son of Amon, the king of Judah, in the thirteenth year of his reign. [3] It came also in the days of Jehoiakim, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, until the end of the eleventh year of Zedekiah, the son of Josiah, the king of Judah, until the exile of Jerusalem in the fifth month.

[4] And the word of Yahweh came to me, saying,

[5] "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you,
and before you came out from *the* womb I consecrated you;
I appointed you *as* a prophet to the nations."

[6] Then I said, "Ah, Lord Yahweh! Look, I do not know *how* to speak, for I *am* a youth." [7] But Yahweh said to me, "You must not say, 'I *am* a youth,' for to whomever I send you, you will go, and whatever I command you, you will speak. [8] Do not be afraid of them, for I *am* with you to deliver you," declares Yahweh. [9] Then Yahweh stretched out his hand and he touched my mouth, and Yahweh said to me,

"Look, I have put my words in your mouth.

Genesis 32:30 Then Jacob called the name of the place Peniel *which means* "I have seen God face to face and my life was spared."

Deuteronomy 5:24 you said, 'Look, Yahweh our God has shown us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice from the midst of the fire; this day we have seen that God can speak with a human being, yet he remains alive.

Judges 6:22–24 And Gideon realized that he *was* the angel of Yahweh; and Gideon said, "Oh, my lord Yahweh! For now I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face." [23] And Yahweh said to him, "Peace be with you. Do not fear; you will not die." [24] And Gideon built there an altar to Yahweh, and he called it "Yahweh *is* peace." To this day it is still in Ophrah *of the* Abiezrites.

Exodus 3:1–3 And Moses was a shepherd with the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the west *of* the desert, and he came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. [2] And the angel of Yahweh appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush, and he looked, and there was the bush burning with fire, but the bush was not being consumed. [3] And Moses said, "Let me turn aside and see this great sight. Why does the bush not burn up?"

Genesis 28:10–22 Then Jacob went out from Beersheba and went to Haran. [11] And he arrived at a *certain* place and spent the night there, because the sun had set. And he took *one* of the stones of the place and put *it* under his head and slept at that place. [12] And he dreamed, and behold, a stairway was

set on the earth, and its top touched the heavens. And behold, angels of God *were* going up and going down on it. [13] And behold, Yahweh *was* standing beside him, and he said, "I *am* Yahweh, the God of Abraham your father, and the God of Isaac. The ground on which you *were* sleeping I will give to you and to your descendants. [14] Your descendants shall be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west, and to the east, and to the north and to the south. And all the families of the earth will be blessed through you and through your descendants. [15] Now behold, I *am* with you, and I will keep you wherever you go. And I will bring you to this land, for I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised to you." [16] Then Jacob awoke from his sleep and said, "Surely Yahweh is indeed in this place and I did not know!" [17] Then he was afraid and said, "How awesome *is* this place! This is nothing else than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven!" [18] And Jacob rose early in the morning, and he took the stone that he had put under his head and set it up *as* a stone pillar, and poured oil on top of it. [19] And he called the name of that place Bethel; however, the name of the city *was* formerly Luz. [20] And Jacob made a vow saying, "If God will be with me and protect me on this way that I am going, and gives me food to eat and clothing to wear, [21] and *if* I return in peace to the house of my father, then Yahweh will become my God. [22] And this stone that I have set up *as* a pillar shall be the house of God, and *of* all that you give to me I will certainly give a tenth to you."

Genesis 31:11–12 Then the angel of God said to me in the dream, 'Jacob,' and I said, 'Here I *am*.' [12] And he said, 'Lift up your eyes and see—all the rams mounting the flock *are* streaked, speckled, and dappled, for I have seen all that Laban is doing to you.

Exodus 23:20–22 " 'Look, I *am about to* send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. [21] Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, because he will not forgive your transgression, for my name is in him. [22] But if you listen attentively to his voice and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and a foe to your foes.

Isaiah 30:27–28 Look! The name of Yahweh comes from afar,

burning *with* his anger and heaviness of cloud.

His lips are full *of* indignation,
and his tongue *is* like a devouring fire.
28 And his breath *is* like an overflowing river;
it reaches up to *the* neck
to shake *the* nations with *the* sieve of worthlessness;
and a bridle that leads astray *is* on *the* jawbones of *the* peoples.

Exodus 23:20–22 " 'Look, I *am about to* send an angel before you to guard you on the way and to bring you to the place that I have prepared. 21 Be attentive to him and listen to his voice; do not rebel against him, because he will not forgive your transgression, for my name is in him. 22 But if you listen attentively to his voice and do all that I say, I will be an enemy to your enemies and a foe to your foes.

Judges 2:1–3 And the angel of Yahweh went up from Gilgal to Bokim and said, "I brought you up from Egypt, and I brought you to the land that I had promised to your ancestors. I said, 'I will never break my covenant with you. 2 And *as for* you, do not make a covenant with the inhabitants of this land; break down their altars.' But you did not listen to my voice. Why would you do such a thing? 3 Now I say, I will not drive them out from before you; they will become as thorns for you, and their gods will be a trap for you."

Joshua 24:17–18 for Yahweh our God brought us and our ancestors from the land of Egypt, from the house of slavery, and did these great signs before our eyes. He protected us along the entire way that we went, and among all the peoples through whose midst we passed. 18 And Yahweh drove out all the people before us, the Amorites who live *in* the land. We will serve Yahweh, for he *is* our God."

Deuteronomy 4:37–38 And because he loved your ancestors he chose their descendants after them. And he brought you forth from Egypt with his own presence, by his great strength, 38 to drive out nations greater and more numerous than you from before you, to bring you *and* to give to you their land *as* an inheritance, as *it is* this day.

Genesis 48:15–16 And he blessed Joseph and said,

"The God before whom my fathers, Abraham and Isaac, walked,

The God who shepherded me all my life unto this day,
16 The angel who redeemed me from all evil,
may he bless the boys.
And through them let my name be perpetuated,
and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac.
And let them multiply into many in the midst of the earth.

Genesis 48:16 The angel who redeemed me from all evil,
may he bless the boys.
And through them let my name be perpetuated,
and the name of my fathers, Abraham and Isaac.
And let them multiply into many in the midst of the earth.

Judges 6:22–23 And Gideon realized that he *was* the angel of Yahweh; and Gideon said, "Oh, my lord Yahweh! For now I have seen the angel of Yahweh face to face." 23 And Yahweh said to him, "Peace be with you. Do not fear; you will not die."

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

John 1:14 And the Word became flesh and took up residence among us, and we saw his glory, glory as of the one and only from the Father, full of grace and truth.

John 8:56–58 Abraham your father rejoiced that he would see my day, and he saw *it* and was glad."
57 So the Jews said to him, "You are not yet fifty years *old*, and have you seen Abraham?" 58 Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly I say to you, before Abraham was, I am!"

Jude 5 Now I want to remind you, *although* you know everything once and for all, that Jesus, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, the second time destroyed those who did not believe.

John 17:5–6 And now, Father, you glorify me at your side with the glory that I had at your side before the world existed.
6 "I have revealed your name to the men whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours, and you have given them to me, and they have

kept your word.

John 17:26 And I made known to them your name, and will make *it* known, in order that the love *with* which you loved me may be in them, and I *may be* in them."

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the full armor of God, so that you may be able to stand against the stratagems of the devil,

Colossians 1:16 because all *things* in the heavens and on the earth were created by him, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers, all *things* were created through him and for him,

1 Corinthians 2:6–8 Now we do speak wisdom among the mature, but wisdom not of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are perishing, [7] but we speak the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery, which God predestined before the ages for our glory, [8] which none of the rulers of this age knew. For if they had known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Ephesians 3:10 in order that the many-sided wisdom of God might be made known now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places* through the church,

Ephesians 6:12 because our struggle is not against blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Chapter Seven: Rules of Engagement

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,
at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,
he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,
according to the number of the children of Israel.
9 For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,
Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Genesis 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, and those who curse you I will curse. And all families of the earth will be blessed in you."

Psalm 82:6–8 I have said, "You *are* gods,
and sons of the Most High, all of you.
7 However, you will die like men,
and you will fall like one of the princes."
8 Rise up, O God, judge the earth,
because you shall inherit all the nations.

Genesis 46:3–4 Then he said, "I *am* God, the God of your father. Do not be afraid to go down to Egypt, for I will make you a great nation there. 4 I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I myself will also bring you up. And Joseph will place his hand over your eyes."

Genesis 50:20 As for you, you planned evil against me, *but* God planned it for good, in order to do this—to keep many people alive—as *it is* today.

Genesis 15:13–16 And he said to Abram, "You must surely know that your descendants shall be *as* aliens in a land not their own. And they shall serve them and they shall oppress them four hundred years. 14 And also the nation that they serve I will judge. Then afterward they shall go out with great possessions. 15 And *as for* you, you shall go to your ancestors in peace; you shall be buried in a good old age. 16 And the fourth generation shall return here, for the guilt of the Amorites is not yet complete."

Genesis 46:4 I myself will go down with you to Egypt, and I myself will also bring you up. And Joseph will place his hand over your eyes."

Exodus 3:1–14 And Moses was a shepherd with the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, and he led the flock to the west *of* the desert, and he came to the mountain of God, to Horeb. [2] And the angel of Yahweh appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush, and he looked, and there was the bush burning with fire, but the bush was not being consumed. [3] And Moses said, "Let me turn aside and see this great sight. Why does the bush not burn up?" [4] And Yahweh saw that he turned aside to see, and God called to him from the midst of the bush, and he said, "Moses, Moses." And he said, "Here I *am*." [5] And he said, "You must not come near to here. Take off your sandals from on your feet, because the place on which you *are* standing, it *is* holy ground." [6] And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face because he was afraid of looking at God.

[7] And Yahweh said, "Surely I have seen the misery of my people who *are* in Egypt, and I have heard their cry of distress because of their oppressors, for I know their sufferings. [8] And I have come down to deliver them from the hand of *the* Egyptians and to bring them up from this land to a good and wide land, to a land flowing with milk and honey, to the place of the Canaanites and the Hittites and the Amorites and the Perizzites and the Hivites and the Jebusites. [9] And now, look, the cry of distress of the Israelites has come to me, and also I see the oppression *with* which *the* Egyptians *are* oppressing them. [10] And now come, and I will send you to Pharaoh, and *you must* bring my people, the Israelites, out from Egypt."

[11] But Moses said to God, "Who *am* I that I should go to Pharaoh and that I should bring the Israelites out from Egypt?" [12] And he said, "Because I am with you, and this *will be* the sign for you that I myself have sent you: When you bring the people out from Egypt, you will serve God on this mountain." [13] But Moses said to God, "Look, *if* I go to the Israelites and I say to them, 'The God of your ancestors has sent me to you,' and they say to me, 'What *is* his name?' *then* what shall I say to them?" [14] And God said to Moses, "I am that I am." And he said, "So you must say to the Israelites, 'I am sent me to you.' "

Exodus 5:1 And afterward, Moses and Aaron went, and they said to Pharaoh, “Thus says Yahweh the God of Israel, ‘Release my people so that they may hold a festival for me in the desert.’ ”

Exodus 5:2 And Pharaoh said, “Who is Yahweh that I should listen to his voice to release Israel? I do not know Yahweh, and also I will not release Israel.”

Exodus 4:21 And Yahweh said to Moses, “When you go to return to Egypt, see all of the wonders that I have put in your hand, and do them before Pharaoh, and I myself will harden his heart, and he will not release the people.

Exodus 12:12 “And I will go through the land of Egypt during this night, and I will strike all of the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from human to animal, and I will do punishments among all of the gods of Egypt. I *am* Yahweh.

Numbers 33:4 while the Egyptians *were* burying all the firstborn among them whom Yahweh struck. Yahweh *also* executed punishments among their gods.

Exodus 12:29 And in the middle of the night, Yahweh struck all of the firstborn in the land of Egypt, from the firstborn of Pharaoh sitting on his throne to the firstborn of the captive who *was* in the prison house and every firstborn of an animal.

Galatians 6:7 Do not be deceived: God is not to be mocked, for whatever a person sows, this he will also reap,

Joshua 2:8–10 Before they went to sleep, she came up to them on the roof [9] and said to the men, “I know that Yahweh has given you the land, and that dread of you has fallen on us, and that all the inhabitants of the land melt away *in fear* because of your presence. [10] For we have heard how Yahweh dried up the waters of the Red Sea before you when you went out from Egypt, and what you did to the two kings of the Amorites that *were* beyond the Jordan, Sihon and Og, whom you utterly destroyed.

Exodus 15:16–18 Terror and dread fell on them;

at the greatness of your arm they became silent like the stone,

until your people passed by, Yahweh,

until *the* people whom you bought passed by.

[17] You brought them and planted them on the mountain of your inheritance,

a place you made for yourself to inhabit, Yahweh,

a sanctuary, Lord, *that* your hands established.

[18] Yahweh will reign as king forever and ever."

Joshua 9:9 And they said to him, "Your servants have come from a very far land because of the name of Yahweh your God; we have heard of his reputation, of all that he did in Egypt,

Exodus 18:11 Now I know that Yahweh is greater than all the gods, even in the matter where they the Egyptians dealt arrogantly against the Israelites."

Exodus 15:11 Who is like you among the gods, Yahweh?

Who is like you—glorious in holiness, awesome *in* praiseworthy actions, doing wonders?

Exodus 4:22–23 And you must say to Pharaoh, 'Thus says Yahweh, "Israel *is* my son, my firstborn." [23] And I said to you, "Release my son and let him serve me," but you refused to release him. Look, I *am about* to kill your son, your firstborn.' "

Acts 7:52–53 Which of the prophets did your fathers not persecute? And they killed those who announced beforehand about the coming of the Righteous One, whose betrayers and murderers you have now become, [53] *you* who received the law by directions of angels and have not observed *it*!"

Hebrews 2:1–2 Because of this, *it is* all the more necessary *that* we pay attention to the *things* we have heard, lest we drift away. [2] For if the word spoken through angels was binding and every transgression and act of disobedience received a just penalty,

Deuteronomy 9:9–10 When I went up the mountain to receive the stone tablets, the tablets of the covenant that Yahweh made with you, and remained on the mountain forty days and forty nights, I did not eat food and I did not drink water. [10] And Yahweh gave me the two tablets of stone written with the finger of God, and on them *was writing* according to all the words that Yahweh spoke with you at the mountain, from the midst of the fire on the day of the assembly.

Exodus 24:9–11 And Moses and Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, and seventy from the elders of Israel went up. [10] And they saw the God of Israel, and *what was* under his feet *was* like sapphire tile work and like the very heavens for clearness. [11] And toward the leaders of the Israelites he did not stretch out his hand, and they beheld God, and they ate, and they drank.

Leviticus 19:2 "Speak to all the community of the Israelites, and say to them, 'You must be holy, because I, Yahweh your God, *am* holy.

Deuteronomy 4:6–8 And you must observe them diligently, for that *is* your wisdom and your insight before the eyes of the people, who will hear all *of* these rules, and they will say, 'Surely this great nation *is* a wise and discerning people.' [7] For what great nation *has* for it a god near to it as Yahweh our God, whenever we call *upon* him? [8] And what *other* great nation has for it just rules and regulations just like this whole law that I *am* setting before you today?

Deuteronomy 28:9–10 Yahweh will establish you for himself as a holy people as he has sworn to you, if you keep the commandments of Yahweh your God and you walk in his ways. [10] And all of the peoples of the earth shall see that by the name of Yahweh you are called, and they shall fear you.

Exodus 19:6 but you, you will *belong* to me *as* a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you will speak to the Israelites."

Isaiah 42:6 "I *am* Yahweh; I have called you in righteousness,

and I have grasped your hand and watched over you;

and I have given you as a covenant of *the* people,

as a light of *the* nations,

Isaiah 49:6 And he says, "It is trivial for you to be a servant for me,

to raise up the tribes of Jacob

and to bring back the preserved of Israel.

I will give you as a light *to the* nations,

to be my salvation to the end of the earth."

Isaiah 51:4 "Listen attentively to me, my people,

and my nation, listen to me!

For a teaching will go out from me,

and I will cause my justice to rest for a light to *the* peoples.

Isaiah 60:3 And nations shall come to your light,

and kings to the bright light of your sunrise.

Genesis 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, and those who curse you I will curse. And all families of the earth will be blessed in you."

Acts 4:12 And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven that is given among people by which we must be saved."

Romans 11:17–24 Now if some of the branches were broken off, and you, *although you* were a wild olive tree, were grafted in among them and became a sharer of the root of the olive tree's richness, [18] do not boast against the branches. But if you boast against *them*, you do not support the root, but the root *supports* you. [19] Then you will say, "Branches were broken off in order that I could be grafted in." [20] Well said! They were broken off because of unbelief, but you stand firm because of faith. Do not think arrogant *thoughts*, but be afraid. [21] For if God did not spare the natural branches, neither will he spare you. [22] See, then, the kindness and severity of God: severity upon those who have fallen, but upon you the kindness of God—if you continue in his kindness, for otherwise you also will be cut off. [23] And those also, if they do not persist in unbelief, will be grafted in, because God is able to graft them in again. [24] For if you were cut off from what is by nature a wild olive tree, and contrary to nature were grafted into a cultivated olive tree, how much more will these who are natural branches be grafted into their own olive tree?

Hebrews 3:19 And *so* we see that they were not able to enter because of unbelief.

Hebrews 10:22 let us approach with a true heart in the full assurance of faith, our hearts sprinkled *clean* from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.

Hebrews 10:38–39 But my righteous one will live by faith,

and if he shrinks back, my soul is not well pleased with him."

[39] But we are not among those who shrink back to destruction, but among those who have faith to the preservation of *our* souls.

Deuteronomy 4:19–20 And do this so that you do not lift your eyes *toward* heaven and observe the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heaven, and be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that Yahweh your God has allotted to all *of* the peoples under all *of* the heaven. [20] But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out from the furnace of iron, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to him, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,

at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,

he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,

according to the number of the children of Israel.

[9] For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,

Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Luke 10:1 And after these *things*, the Lord also appointed seventy-two others and sent them out two by two before him into every town and place where he was about to go.

Galatians 3:26–29 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, [27] for as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. [28] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. [29] And if you *are* Christ's, then you are descendants of Abraham, heirs according to the promise.

Revelation 3:21 The one who conquers, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also have conquered and have sat down with my Father on his throne.

John 1:12 But as many as received him—to those who believe in his name—he gave to them authority to become children of God,

1 John 3:1–3 See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called children of God, and we are! Because of this the world does not know us: because it did not know him. [2] Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. [3] And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as that one is pure.

1 Corinthians 6:3 Do you not know that we will judge angels, not to mention ordinary matters?

1 John 3:1–3 See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called children of God, and we are! Because of this the world does not know us: because it did not know him. [2] Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. [3] And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as that one is pure.

1 Corinthians 15:35–49 But someone will say, "How are the dead raised? And with what sort of body do they come?" [36] Foolish person! What you sow does not come to life unless it dies. [37] And what you sow *is* not the body which it will become, but you sow the bare seed, whether perhaps of wheat or of some of the rest. [38] But God gives to it a body just as he wishes, and to each one of the seeds its own body. [39] Not all flesh *is* the same, but *there is* one flesh of human beings, and another flesh of animals, and another flesh of birds, and another of fish, [40] and heavenly bodies and earthly bodies. But the glory of the heavenly *bodies is* of one kind, and the *glory* of the earthly *bodies is* of another kind. [41] *There is* one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars, for star differs from star in glory.

[42] Thus also *is* the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruptibility. [43] It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. [44] It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. If *there* is a natural body, *there* is also a spiritual *body*. [45] Thus also it is written, "The first man, Adam, became a living soul"; the last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit. [46] But the spiritual *is* not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. [47] The first man *is* from the earth, made of earth; the second man *is* from heaven. [48] As the one *who is* made of earth, so also *are* those *who are* made of earth, and as the heavenly, so also *are* those *who are* heavenly. [49] And just as we have borne the image of the *one who is* made of earth, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.

Revelation 2:26 And the one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, I will give him authority over the nations,

Genesis 3:15 And I will put hostility
between you and between the woman,
and between your offspring and between her offspring;
he will strike you *on the* head,
and you will strike him *on the* heel.”

Chapter Eight: Sacred Space

Leviticus 19:2 “Speak to all the community of the Israelites, and say to them, ‘You must be holy, because I, Yahweh your God, *am* holy.

Leviticus 11:13–19 “ ‘And these you must detest from the birds; they must not be eaten—they *are* detestable: the eagle and the vulture and the short-toed eagle, [14] and the red kite and the black kite according to its kind, [15] every crow according to its kind, [16] and the ostrich and the short-eared owl and the seagull and the hawk according to its kind, [17] and the little owl and the cormorant and the great owl, [18] and the barn owl and the desert owl and the carrion vulture, [19] and the stork, the heron according to its kind and the hoopoe and the bat.

Leviticus 11:24–38 And by these you shall become unclean—anyone who touches their dead body shall become unclean until the evening, [25] and anyone who carries their dead body must wash his garments, and he shall be unclean until the evening.

[26] “ ‘*With regard* to any animal that has a divided hoof but does not split the hoof, or does not have a cud *for* chewing—they *are* unclean for you; anyone who touches them shall become unclean. [27] And anything that walks upon its paws among any of the animals that walks on *all* fours—they *are* unclean for you; anyone who touches their dead body shall become unclean until the evening, [28] and the one who carries their dead body must wash his garments, and he shall be unclean until the evening—they *are* unclean for you.

[29] “ ‘And these *are* the unclean for you among the swarmers that swarm on the land: the weasel and the mouse and the thorn-tailed lizard according to its kind, [30] and the gecko and the land crocodile and the lizard and the sand lizard and the chameleon. [31] These *are* the unclean for you among all the swarmers; anyone who touches them at their death shall become unclean until the evening. [32] And anything on which one of them falls at their death shall become unclean: any object of wood or garment or skin or sackcloth—any object that has performed work—must be placed in water,

and it shall be unclean until the evening, and *then* it shall be clean. [33] And any clay vessel into which one of them falls, all that is in it shall become unclean, and you must break it. [34] Any of the food that could be eaten on which water *from such a vessel* comes shall become unclean, and any liquid that could be drunk in any *such* vessel shall become unclean. [35] And anything on which one of their dead bodies falls shall become unclean: an oven or a stove must be broken—they *are* unclean and shall be unclean for you. [36] Surely a spring or a cistern collecting water shall be clean, but that which touches their dead body shall become unclean. [37] And when one of their dead bodies falls on any seed for sowing, it *is* clean. [38] But when water is put on *the* seed and one of their dead bodies falls on it, it *is* unclean for you.

Leviticus 17:11 Indeed the flesh's life *is* in the blood, and I have given it to you on the altar to make atonement for your lives, because it *is* the blood with the life that makes atonement.

Genesis 1:26 And God said, "Let us make humankind in our image and according to our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of heaven, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every moving thing that moves upon the earth."

Genesis 9:6 "*As for* the one shedding the blood of humankind,

by humankind his blood shall be shed,

for God made humankind in his own image.

Genesis 12:1–3 And Yahweh said to Abram, "Go out from your land and from your relatives, and from the house of your father, to the land that I will show you. [2] And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great. And you will be a blessing. [3] And I will bless those who bless you, and those who curse you I will curse. And all families of the earth will be blessed in you."

Exodus 25:31–40 "And you will make a lampstand of pure gold; the lampstand will be made of hammered work—its base and its branch, its cups, its buds, and its blossoms will be from it. [32] And six branches *will be* going out from its sides, three branches of the lampstand from its one side and three branches of the lampstand from its second side. [33] Three almond-flower cups *will be* on the one branch *with* a bud and a blossom, and three

almond-flower cups *will be* on the one branch *with* a bud and a blossom—
likewise for the six branches going out from the lampstand. [34] And on the
lampstand *will be* four almond-flower cups, *with* its buds and its blossoms.
[35] And a bud *will be* under the two branches *that come* from it, and a bud
under the two branches from it, and a bud under the two branches from it,
likewise for the six branches coming out from the lampstand. [36] Their buds
and their branches will be from it, all of it one *piece* of pure gold hammered
work. [37] And you will make its seven lamps, and its lamps will be set up,
and it will give light in the space in front of it. [38] And its snuffers and its fire
pans *will be* pure gold. [39] It will be made *from* a talent of pure gold, with all
these *pieces of* equipment. [40] And see and make *all* according to their
pattern, which you were shown in the mountain.

Exodus 25:10–22 "And they will make an ark of acacia wood, two and a
half cubits its length and a cubit and a half its width and a cubit and a half
its height. [11] And you will overlay it with pure gold, inside and outside you
will overlay it, and you will make on it a gold molding all around. [12] And
you will cast for it four gold rings, and you will put *them* on its four feet,
with two rings on its one side and two rings on its second side. [13] And you
will make poles of acacia wood, and you will overlay them *with* gold. [14]
And you will put the poles into the rings on the sides of the ark to carry the
ark with them. [15] In the rings of the ark will be the poles; they will not be
removed from it. [16] And you will put into the ark the testimony that I will
give to you.

[17] "And you will make an atonement cover of pure gold, two and a half
cubits its length and a cubit and a half its width. [18] And you will make two
cherubim of gold; you will make them of hammered work at the two ends
of the atonement cover. [19] And make one cherub at one end and one cherub
at the other end of the atonement cover; you will make the cherubim on its
two ends. [20] And the cherubim will be *with* outspread wings above, covering
with their wings over the atonement cover and facing each other; the faces
of the cherubim will be toward the atonement cover. [21] And you will put the
atonement cover above onto the ark, and into the ark you will put the
testimony that I will give you. [22] And I will meet you there, and I will speak
with you from over the atonement cover, from between the two cherubim

that *are to be* on the ark of the testimony—all that I will command you to the Israelites.

Genesis 3:24 So he drove the man out, and placed cherubim east of the garden of Eden, and a flaming, turning sword to guard the way to the tree of life.

Exodus 25:18–20 And you will make two cherubim of gold; you will make them of hammered work at the two ends of the atonement cover. [19] And make one cherub at one end and one cherub at the other end of the atonement cover; you will make the cherubim on its two ends. [20] And the cherubim will be *with* outspread wings above, covering with their wings over the atonement cover and facing each other; the faces of the cherubim will be toward the atonement cover.

1 Chronicles 28:2 And King David rose to his feet and said, "Listen to me, my brothers and my people. I myself wanted to build a house of rest for the ark of the covenant of Yahweh and the footstool of our God, and I prepared to build.

Deuteronomy 4:19–20 And do this so that you do not lift your eyes *toward* heaven and observe the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heaven, and be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that Yahweh your God has allotted to all *of* the peoples under all *of* the heaven. [20] But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out from the furnace of iron, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to him, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,

at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,

he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,

according to the number of the children of Israel.

[9] For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,

Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Leviticus 17:7 And they may no longer sacrifice their sacrifices to the goat-idols after which they were prostituting. This is a lasting statute for them throughout their generations." '

Hebrews 2:14 Therefore, since the children share in blood and flesh, he also in like manner shared in these *same things*, in order that through death he

could destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil,

Hebrews 13:12 Therefore Jesus also suffered outside the gate, in order that he might sanctify the people by his own blood.

Romans 11:27 And this *is* the covenant from me with them

when I take away their sins."

1 John 3:5 And you know that that one was revealed in order that he might take away sins, and in him *there* is no sin.

2 Corinthians 5:4 For indeed we who are in this tent groan, being burdened for this reason, that we do not want to be unclothed, but to be clothed, in order that what is mortal may be swallowed up by life.

Romans 8:9–11 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God lives in you. But if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, this person does not belong to him. [10] But if Christ *is* in you, the body *is* dead because of sin, but the Spirit *is* life because of righteousness. [11] And if the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you, the one who raised Christ Jesus from the dead will also make alive your mortal bodies through his Spirit who lives in you.

2 Corinthians 5:1–3 For we know that if our earthly house, the tent, is destroyed, we have a building from God, a house not made by hands, eternal in the heavens. [2] For indeed, in this *house* we groan, *because we* desire to put on our dwelling from heaven, [3] if indeed, even *after we* have taken *it* off, we will not be found naked.

Revelation 22:1–3 And he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming out from the throne of God and of the Lamb [2] in the middle of its street, and on both sides of the river *is* the tree of life, producing twelve fruits—yielding its fruit according to every month—and the leaves of the tree *are* for the healing of the nations. [3] And there will not be any curse *any* longer, and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his slaves will serve him,

1 Corinthians 5:5 *I have decided* to hand over such a person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

Romans 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery *leading* to fear again, but you have received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, “Abba! Father!”

Galatians 4:5 in order that he might redeem those under the law, in order that we might receive the adoption.

Colossians 1:13 who has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred *us* to the kingdom of the Son he loves,

Chapter Nine: Holy War

Deuteronomy 4:19–20 And do this so that you do not lift your eyes *toward* heaven and observe the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heaven, and be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that Yahweh your God has allotted to all *of* the peoples under all *of* the heaven. [20] But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out from the furnace of iron, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to him, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,
at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,
he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,
according to the number of the children of Israel.
[9] For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,
Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Numbers 13:27 And they told him, "We came to the land that you sent us, and it *is* flowing of milk and honey; this *is* its fruit.

Numbers 13:32–33 And they presented the report of the land that they explored to the Israelites, saying, "The land that we went through to explore *is* a land that eats its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in its midst *are* men of great size. [33] There we saw the Nephilim (the descendants of Anak *came* from the Nephilim), and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their eyes."

Genesis 6:1–4 And it happened *that*, when humankind began to multiply on the face of the ground, daughters were born to them. [2] Then the sons of God saw the daughters of humankind, that they *were* beautiful. And they took for themselves wives from all that they chose. [3] And Yahweh said, "My Spirit shall not abide with humankind forever in that he *is* also flesh. And his days *shall be* one hundred and twenty years." [4] The Nephilim *were* upon the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God went into the daughters of humankind, and they bore children to them. These *were* the mighty warriors that *were* from ancient times, men of renown.

Numbers 13:28–29 Yet the people who are inhabiting *it are* strong and the cities *are* fortified and very large; moreover, we saw the descendants of the Anakites there. [29] *The* Amalekites *are* living in the land of the Negev; the Hittites, Jebusites, and the Amorites *are* living in the hill country; and the Canaanites *are* living at the sea and on the banks of the Jordan."

Numbers 13:31 And the men who went up with him said, "We are not able to go up to the people because they *are* stronger than us."

Numbers 14:11 And Yahweh said to Moses, "How long until this people will despise me, and how long until they will not believe in me, *and* in all the signs that I have done in their midst?

Numbers 14:12 I will strike them with disease, and I will dispossess them; I will make you into a greater and stronger nation than them."

Numbers 14:13–19 And Moses said to Yahweh, "Then the Egyptians will hear that you brought up this people from their midst in your power, [14] and they will tell it to the inhabitants of this land. They heard that you, Yahweh, *are* in the midst of this people, that you are seen eye to eye, and your cloud *is* standing over them, and in a column of cloud you go before them by day and in a column of fire *at* night. [15] But if you destroy this people all at once, the nations that will have heard your message will say, [16] 'Yahweh was unable to bring this people in the land that he swore by an oath, and he slaughtered them in the desert.' [17] But now, please, let the power of my Lord be great, just has you spoke,

> [18] 'Yahweh *is* slow to anger
> and great of loyal love,
> forgiving sin and rebellion;
> but surely he leaves nothing unpunished,
> visiting the sin of the fathers on the sons
> to the third and fourth generations.'

[19] Please forgive the sin of this people according to the greatness of your loyal love, just as you forgave this people, from Egypt until now."

Numbers 14:20–31 Yahweh said, "I have forgiven *them* according to your word; [21] but as I *am* alive, the glory of Yahweh will fill all the earth. [22] But

because all the men who have seen my glory and my signs that I did in Egypt and in the desert yet tested me these ten times and did not listen to my voice, [23] they will not see the land that I swore by oath to their ancestors, and all those who despised me will not see it. [24] But my servant Caleb, because another spirit was with him, he remained true after me, and I will bring him into the land that he entered, and his offspring will take possession of it. [25] And the Amalekites and the Canaanites live in the valleys; tomorrow turn and set out *for* the desert *by* way of the Red Sea."

[26] And Yahweh spoke to Moses and Aaron, saying, [27] "How long *will I bear* this evil community who are grumbling against me? I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites which they are making against me. [28] Say to them, 'Surely as I live,' declares Yahweh, 'just as you spoke in my hearing, so I will do to you; [29] in this desert your corpses will fall, and all your counted ones, according to all your number, from twenty years old and above who grumbled against me. [30] You *yourselves* will not come into the land that I swore by oath to make you to dwell in it, but Caleb son of Jephunneh and Joshua son of Nun. [31] But your little children, whom you said would be plunder, I will bring them, and they will know the land that you rejected.

Genesis 31:7 and your father has cheated me and changed my wages ten times, but God has not allowed him to harm me.

Job 19:3 These ten times you have disgraced me;

you are not ashamed *that* you have attacked me.

Numbers 11:1–14 And it happened, the people were like those who complain of hardship in the hearing of Yahweh, and Yahweh became angry, and the fire of Yahweh burned among them, and it consumed the edge of the camp. [2] Then the people cried out to Moses, and Moses prayed to Yahweh, and the fire died down. [3] And he called the name of that place Taberah because the fire of Yahweh burned among them.

[4] The riff-raff that *were* in their midst had a strong desire; and the Israelites turned back and also wept, and they said, "Who will feed us meat? [5] We remember the fish that we ate in Egypt for nothing, the cucumber, melon, leek, the onions, and the garlic. [6] But now our strength is dried up; there is nothing whatsoever except for the manna before us."

[7] Now the manna *was* like coriander seed, and its outward appearance was like that of bdellium-gum. [8] The people went about and gathered *it*, and they ground *it* with mills or crushed *it* with mortar. Then they boiled *it* in a pot and made it *into* bread-cakes; and it tasted like olive oil cakes. [9] When the dew came down on the camp *at* night, the manna came down *with* it.

[10] Moses heard the people weeping according to their clans, each at the doorway of their tents. Then Yahweh became very angry, and in the eyes of Moses it was bad. [11] And Moses said to Yahweh, "Why have you brought trouble to your servant? Why have I not found favor in your eyes, that the burdens of all these people have been placed on me? [12] Did I conceive all these people? If I have fathered them, that you could say to me, 'Carry them in your lap, just as a foster-father carries the suckling on the land that you swore an oath to their ancestors?' [13] From where do I have meat to give all these people? They weep before me, saying, 'Give us meat and let us eat!' [14] I am not able to carry all these people along alone; they are too heavy for me.

Numbers 11:31–35 Then a wind set out from Yahweh, and it drove quails from the west, and he spread *them* out on the camp about a day's journey on one side and about a day's journey on the other, all around the camp, about

two cubits on the surface of the land. [32] And so the people worked all day
and all night and all the next day, and they gathered the quail (the least of
the ones collecting gathered ten homers). [33] While the meat *was* still
between their teeth, before it was consumed, Yahweh was angry with the
people, and Yahweh struck a very great plague among the people. [34] And he
called the name of that place Kibroth Hattaavah because they buried the
people that were greedy. [35] From Kibroth Hattaavah the people set out *to*
Hazeroth; and they stayed in Hazeroth.

Numbers 12:1–15 And Miriam and Aaron spoke against Moses because of
the Cushite woman whom he took (because he took a Cushite wife); [2] and
they said, "Has Yahweh spoken only through Moses? Has not Yahweh also
spoken through us?" And Yahweh heard it. [3] Now the man, Moses, *was*
more humble than any other person on the face of the earth, [4] and Yahweh
said suddenly to Moses, Aaron, and Miriam, "Go out, you three, to the tent
of assembly." So the three of them when out. [5] And Yahweh went down in a
column of cloud and stood *at* the doorway of the tent, and he called Aaron
and Miriam, and the two of them went, [6] and he said,

"Please hear my words:
    If there is a prophet among you, I, Yahweh,
will make myself known to him in a vision.
    I will speak to him in a dream.
[7] Not so with my servant Moses;
    in all my house he *is* faithful.
[8] I will speak to him mouth to mouth,
    in clearness, not in riddles;
and he will look at the form of Yahweh.

Why were you not afraid to speak against my servant, against Moses?"
[9] And Yahweh became very angry with them, and he went *away*. [10] And the
cloud departed from on the tent, and behold, Miriam *was* infected with a
skin disease white like snow; when Aaron turned toward Miriam, behold,
she was afflicted with a skin disease. [11] So Aaron said to Moses, "Please, my
lord, please do not put on us *this* sin *in* which we were foolish and *in* which

we have sinned. [12] Please do not let her be like the dead, whose flesh is half consumed when coming out from the womb of its mother." [13] And Moses cried to Yahweh, saying, "God, please heal her!" [14] But Yahweh said to Moses, "*If* her father had surely spit in her face, would she not bear her shame for seven days? Let her be confined for seven days to an outside place of the camp, and afterward she may be gathered." [15] So Miriam was confined to the outside place of the camp seven days, and the people did not set out until Miriam was gathered.

Deuteronomy 1:4 *This happened* after defeating Sihon king of the Amorites, who *was* reigning in Heshbon, and Og the king of Bashan, who *was* reigning in Ashtaroth in Edrei.

Joshua 13:12 all the kingdom of Og in Bashan, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei—he was left over from the survivors of the Rephaim; these Moses had defeated and driven out.

Deuteronomy 3:2–3 And Yahweh said to me, 'You should not fear him, for I have given him and all *of* his army and his land into your hand. And *so* you will do to him as you did to Sihon the king of the Amorites, who *was* reigning in Heshbon.' [3] And *so* Yahweh our God also gave Og the king of Bashan, and all of his army into our hand, and we struck him down until not a survivor remained to him.

Deuteronomy 31:4 And Yahweh will do to them *just* as he did to Sihon and to Og, kings of the Amorites, and to their land, which he destroyed with them.

Deuteronomy 2:11 They were reckoned also *as* Rephaim as the Anakites *were*; but the Moabites called them Emim.

Numbers 13:32–33 And they presented the report of the land that they explored to the Israelites, saying, "The land that we went through to explore *is* a land that eats its inhabitants, and all the people whom we saw in its midst *are* men of great size. [33] There we saw the Nephilim (the descendants of Anak *came* from the Nephilim), and we were like grasshoppers in our own sight, and so we were in their eyes."

Deuteronomy 2:33 And so Yahweh our God gave him over to us, and we struck him down, and his sons and all of his people.

Deuteronomy 3:3 And *so* Yahweh our God also gave Og the king of Bashan, and all of his army into our hand, and we struck him down until not a survivor remained to him.

Amos 2:9 Yet I destroyed the Amorite before them, who was as tall as cedars and was as strong as the oaks. I destroyed his fruit above and his roots beneath.

Deuteronomy 3:6 And *so* we destroyed them just as we had done to Sihon the king of Heshbon; *we destroyed* utterly each town of males, the women, and the little children.

Joshua 11:21–22 At that time Joshua came and exterminated the Anakites from the hill country, from Hebron, Debir, Anab, and from all the hill country of Judah, and from all the hill country of Israel; Joshua utterly destroyed them with their cities. [22] None of the Anakites were left in the land of the Israelites; some remained only in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod.

Joshua 13:3 from the Shihor, which *is* east of Egypt, up to the border of Ekron to *the* north, which is reckoned as Canaanite; *there are* five Philistine rulers: the Gazites, Ashdodites, Ashkelonites, Gittites, Ekronites, and the Avvim.

1 Samuel 17:4 Then a champion went out from the camps of *the* Philistines, whose name was Goliath from Gath. His height was six cubits and a span.

1 Chronicles 20:5–8 And again there was war with the Philistines. And Elhanan son of Jair struck down Lahmi, the brother of Goliath the Gittite, the shaft of whose spear *was* like a weaver's beam. [6] And again there was war in Gath. And there was a very tall man *there*, and he had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot, twenty-four in all. He himself *was* also a descendant of the Rephaim. [7] And he taunted Israel, but Jehonathan son of Shimea, brother of David, struck him down. [8] These were born to the giants in Gath, and they fell by the hand of David and by the hand of his servants.

Chapter Ten: Hidden in Plain Sight

Romans 6:23 For the compensation due sin *is* death, but the gift of God *is* eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Genesis 12:3 And I will bless those who bless you, and those who curse you I will curse. And all families of the earth will be blessed in you."

1 John 3:1–3 See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called children of God, and we are! Because of this the world does not know us: because it did not know him. [2] Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. [3] And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as that one is pure.

1 Corinthians 2:7–8 but we speak the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery, which God predestined before the ages for our glory, [8] which none of the rulers of this age knew. For if they had known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Ephesians 2:2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit now working in the sons of disobedience,

Isaiah 53:11 From the trouble of his life he will see;

he will be satisfied.

In his knowledge, *the* righteous *one*, my servant, shall declare many righteous,

and he is the one who will bear their iniquities.

Isaiah 41:8 But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen,

you, the offspring of Abraham my friend,

Isaiah 44:1–2 "But now hear, Jacob my servant,

and Israel, whom I have chosen.

[2] Thus says Yahweh, who made you,

and who formed you in *the* womb and will help you:
you must not fear, my servant Jacob,
and Jeshurun whom I have chosen.
Isaiah 44:21 "Remember these things, Jacob,
and Israel, for you *are* my servant:
I formed you; you *are* my servant;
Israel, you will not be forgotten by me!
Isaiah 45:4 for the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen one.
And I call you by your name;
I give you a name of honor, though you do not know me.
Isaiah 48:20 Go out from Babylon!
Flee from Chaldea!
Proclaim *it* with a shout of rejoicing; proclaim this!
Send it forth to the end of the earth;
say, "Yahweh has redeemed his servant Jacob!"
Isaiah 49:3 And he said to me, "You *are* my servant,
Israel, in whom I will show my glory."

Matthew 17:22–23 Now *as* they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men, [23] and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised." And they were extremely distressed.

Mark 9:30–32 And from there they went out *and* passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, [31] for he was teaching his disciples and was telling them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And *when he* is killed, after three days he will rise." [32] But they did not understand the statement, and they were afraid to ask him.

Matthew 16:21–23 From that time *on* Jesus began to show his disciples that he must go to Jerusalem and suffer many *things* from the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and be raised on the third day. [22] And Peter

took him aside *and* began to rebuke him, saying, God forbid, Lord! This will never happen to you!" [23] But he turned around *and* said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a cause for stumbling to me, because you are not intent on the things of God, but the things of people!"

Luke 24:44–45 And he said to them, "These *are* my words that I spoke to you *while I* was still with you, that everything that is written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled." [45] Then he opened their minds to understand the scriptures,

Matthew 8:28–29 And *when* he came to the other side, to the region of the Gadarenes, two demon-possessed men coming from among the tombs met him, very violent, so that no one was able to pass by along that road. [29] And behold, they cried out, saying, "What do you have to do with us, Son of God? Have you come here to torment us before the time?"

Luke 4:31–35 And he came down to Capernaum, a town of Galilee, and was teaching them on the Sabbath. [32] And they were astounded at his teaching, because he spoke with authority.

[33] And in the synagogue there was a man who had the spirit of an unclean demon, and he cried out with a loud voice, [34] "Ha! Leave us alone, Jesus the Nazarene! Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" [35] And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent and come out of him!" And *after* throwing him down in their midst, the demon came out of him without hurting him at all.

Exodus 4:23 And I said to you, "Release my son and let him serve me," but you refused to release him. Look, I *am about* to kill your son, your firstborn.' "

Hosea 11:1 When Israel was a child, I loved him,

and out of Egypt I called my son.

Psalm 2:7 I will tell the decree;

Yahweh said to me:

"You are my son;

today I have begotten you.

Romans 1:4 who was declared Son of God in power according to the Holy Spirit by the resurrection from the dead of Jesus Christ our Lord,

1 Corinthians 15:45 Thus also it is written, “The first man, Adam, became a living soul”; the last Adam *became* a life-giving spirit.

2 Corinthians 1:19 For the Son of God, Jesus Christ, the one who was proclaimed among you by us, by me and Silvanus and Timothy, did not become “yes” and “no,” but has become “yes” in him.

Hebrews 4:4 For he has spoken somewhere about the seventh *day* in this way: “And God rested on the seventh day from all his works,”

Genesis 2:15 And Yahweh God took the man and set him in the garden of Eden to cultivate it and to keep it.

Isaiah 41:8 But you, Israel, my servant, Jacob, whom I have chosen,
you, the offspring of Abraham my friend,

Isaiah 44:1–2 “But now hear, Jacob my servant,
and Israel, whom I have chosen.
2 Thus says Yahweh, who made you,
and who formed you in *the* womb and will help you:
you must not fear, my servant Jacob,
and Jeshurun whom I have chosen.

Isaiah 44:21 “Remember these things, Jacob,
and Israel, for you *are* my servant:
I formed you; you *are* my servant;
Israel, you will not be forgotten by me!

Isaiah 45:4 for the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen one.
And I call you by your name;
I give you a name of honor, though you do not know me.

Isaiah 48:20 Go out from Babylon!
Flee from Chaldea!
Proclaim *it* with a shout of rejoicing; proclaim this!
Send it forth to the end of the earth;
say, “Yahweh has redeemed his servant Jacob!”

Isaiah 49:3 And he said to me, “You *are* my servant,

Israel, in whom I will show my glory.”

2 Samuel 3:18 So then, bring it about, because Yahweh had said to David, “Through the hand of David my servant *I am about* to save my people Israel from the hand of *the* Philistines and from the hand of all their enemies.”

Psalm 89:3 “I made a covenant with my chosen one;

I swore *an oath* to David my servant:

1 Kings 3:7 So then, O Yahweh, you are my God. You have made your servant king in place of David my father *though* I *am* a young boy. I do not know going out or coming in.

2 Chronicles 32:16 And still more his servants said against Yahweh God and against Hezekiah his servant.

Acts 3:13 The God of Abraham and of Isaac and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus, whom you handed over and denied in the presence of Pilate, *after* he had decided to release *him*.

Acts 4:30 *as* you extend your hand to heal and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”

Philippians 2:1–8 Therefore, if *there is* any encouragement in Christ, if any consolation of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, [2] complete my joy, so that you are in agreement, having the same love, united in spirit, having one purpose. [3] *Do* nothing according to selfish ambition or according to empty conceit, but in humility considering one another better than yourselves, [4] each of you not looking out for your own interests, but also each of you *for* the interests of others.

[5] Think this in yourselves which *was* also in Christ Jesus,

[6] who, existing in the form of God,

did not consider being equal with God something to be grasped,

[7] but emptied himself

by taking the form of a slave,

by becoming in the likeness of people.

And being found in appearance like a man,

[8] he humbled himself

by becoming obedient to the point of death,

that is, death on a cross.

Romans 5:12 Because of this, just as sin entered into the world through one man, and death through sin, so also death spread to all people because all sinned.

Luke 10:1–9 And after these *things*, the Lord also appointed seventy-two others and sent them out two by two before him into every town and place where he was about to go. [2] And he said to them, "The harvest *is* plentiful, but the workers *are* few. Therefore ask the Lord of the harvest that he send out workers into his harvest. [3] Go! Behold, I am sending you out like lambs in the midst of wolves! [4] Do not carry a money bag or a traveler's bag or sandals, and greet no one along the road. [5] And into whatever house you enter, first say, "Peace *be* to this household!" [6] And if a son of peace is there, your peace will rest on him. But if not, it will return to you. [7] And remain in the same house, eating and drinking whatever they provide, for the worker *is* worthy of his pay. Do not move from house to house. [8] And into whatever town you enter and they welcome you, eat whatever is set before you, [9] and heal the sick in it, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."

Luke 10:18 So he said to them, "I saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven.

1 Corinthians 15:20–23 But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who have fallen asleep. [21] For since through a man *came* death, also through a man *came* the resurrection of the dead. [22] For just as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. [23] But each in his own group: Christ the first fruits, then those *who are* Christ's at his coming,

Hebrews 12:22–24 But you have come to Mount Zion, and to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, and to tens of thousands of angels, to the festal gathering [23] and assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of righteous *people* made perfect, [24] and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks better than Abel's *does*.

John 1:12 But as many as received him—to those who believe in his name—he gave to them authority to become children of God,

Chapter Eleven: Supernatural Intent

1 Corinthians 2:6–8 Now we do speak wisdom among the mature, but wisdom not of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are perishing, [7] but we speak the hidden wisdom of God in a mystery, which God predestined before the ages for our glory, [8] which none of the rulers of this age knew. For if they had known *it*, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

Mark 1:11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

John 1:29 On the next day he saw Jesus coming to him and said, "Look! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!

Matthew 17:22–23 Now *as* they were gathering in Galilee, Jesus said to them, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men, [23] and they will kill him, and on the third day he will be raised." And they were extremely distressed.

Mark 9:30–32 And from there they went out *and* passed through Galilee. And he did not want anyone to know, [31] for he was teaching his disciples and was telling them, "The Son of Man is being betrayed into the hands of men, and they will kill him. And *when he* is killed, after three days he will rise." [32] But they did not understand the statement, and they were afraid to ask him.

Matthew 4:1 Then Jesus was led up into the wilderness by the Spirit to be tempted by the devil,

Mark 1:12 And immediately the Spirit drove him out into the wilderness.

Luke 4:1–13 And Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness [2] forty days, being tempted by the devil. And he ate nothing during those days, and *when* they were completed, he was hungry. [3] So the devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, order this stone that it become bread!" [4] And Jesus replied to him, "It is written, 'Man will not live on bread alone.' "

[5] And he led him up *and* showed him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. [6] And the devil said to him, “I will give you all this domain and their glory, because it has been handed over to me, and I can give it to whomever I want. [7] So if you will worship before me, all *this* will be yours.” [8] And Jesus answered *and* said to him, “It is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.’ ”

[9] And he brought him to Jerusalem, and had him stand on the highest point of the temple and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down from here, [10] for it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you,
to protect you,’

[11] and

‘on *their* hands they will lift you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

[12] And Jesus answered *and* said to him, “It is said, ‘You are not to put to the test the Lord your God.’ ” [13] And *when* the devil had completed every temptation, he departed from him until a favorable time.

John 12:31 Now is the judgment of this world! Now the ruler of this world will be thrown out!

Deuteronomy 4:19–20 And do this so that you do not lift your eyes *toward* heaven and observe the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heaven, and be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that Yahweh your God has allotted to all *of* the peoples under all *of* the heaven. [20] But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out from the furnace of iron, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to him, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,
at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,
he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,
according to the number of the children of Israel.
[9] For Yahweh’s portion *was* his people,
Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Matthew 4:3–11 And the tempter approached *and* said to him, “If you are the Son of God, order that these stones become bread.” [4] But he answered *and* said, “It is written, ‘Man will not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes out of the mouth of God.’ ”

[5] Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the highest point of the temple [6] and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down! For it is written,

‘He will command his angels concerning you,’

and

‘On *their* hands they will lift you up,
lest you strike your foot against a stone.’ ”

[7] Jesus said to him, “On the other hand it is written, ‘You are not to put the Lord your God to the test.’ ”

[8] Again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, [9] and he said to him, “I will give to you all these things, if you will fall down *and* worship me.” [10] Then Jesus said to him, “Go away, Satan, for it is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God and serve only him.’ ” [11] Then the devil left him, and behold, angels came and began ministering to him.

Matthew 4:8–9 Again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, [9] and he said to him, “I will give to you all these things, if you will fall down *and* worship me.”

Matthew 4:8–9 Again the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory, [9] and he said to him, “I will give to you all these things, if you will fall down *and* worship me.”

Mark 1:16–28 And *as he* was passing by along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and Andrew, Simon’s brother, casting *a net* into the sea (for they were fishermen). [17] And Jesus said to them, “Follow me and I will make you become fishers of people.” [18] And immediately they left their nets *and* followed him. [19] And going on a little *farther*, he saw James the *son* of

Zebedee and his brother John, and they *were* in the boat mending the nets. [20] And immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men *and* went away after him. [21] And they went into Capernaum and immediately on the Sabbath he began to teach in the synagogue.

[22] And they were amazed at his teaching, because he was teaching them like one who had authority, and not like the scribes. [23] And so then there was a man in their synagogue with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, [24] saying, "Leave us alone, Jesus the Nazarene! Have you come to destroy us? I know who you are—the Holy One of God!" [25] And Jesus rebuked him, saying, "Be silent, and come out of him!" [26] And *after* convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice, the unclean spirit came out of him. [27] And they were all amazed, so that *they began* to discuss with one another, saying, "What is this? A new teaching with authority! He even commands the unclean spirits and they obey him." [28] And the report about him then went out everywhere in the whole surrounding region of Galilee.

Luke 9:1–5 And summoning the twelve, he gave them power and authority over all the demons and to cure diseases, [2] and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal the sick. [3] And he said to them, "Take along nothing for the journey—neither a staff, nor a traveler's bag, nor bread, nor money, nor to have two tunics apiece. [4] And into whatever house you enter, stay there and depart from there. [5] And *as for* all those who do not welcome you—*when you* depart from that town, shake off the dust from your feet for a testimony against them."

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,

at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,

he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,

according to the number of the children of Israel.

[9] For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,

Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Romans 1:16–17 For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. [17] For the righteousness of God is revealed in it from faith to faith, just as it is written, "But the one who is righteous by faith will live."

Luke 10:1 And after these *things*, the Lord also appointed seventy-two others and sent them out two by two before him into every town and place where he was about to go.

Luke 10:9 and heal the sick in it, and say to them, "The kingdom of God has come near to you."

Luke 10:17 And the seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!"

Deuteronomy 4:19–20 And do this so that you do not lift your eyes *toward* heaven and observe the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heaven, and be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that Yahweh your God has allotted to all *of* the peoples under all *of* the heaven. [20] But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out from the furnace of iron, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to him, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,

at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,

he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,

according to the number of the children of Israel.

[9] For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,

Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Luke 10:17 And the seventy-two returned with joy, saying, "Lord, even the demons are subject to us in your name!"

Luke 10:18 So he said to them, "I saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven.

Revelation 12:10 And I heard a loud voice in heaven saying,

"Now the salvation and the power

and the kingdom of our God

and the authority of his Christ have come,

because the accuser of our brothers has been thrown down,

the one who accuses them before our God day and night.

Genesis 6:1–4 And it happened *that*, when humankind began to multiply on the face of the ground, daughters were born to them. [2] Then the sons of God

saw the daughters of humankind, that they *were* beautiful. And they took for themselves wives from all that they chose. [3] And Yahweh said, “My Spirit shall not abide with humankind forever in that he *is* also flesh. And his days *shall be* one hundred and twenty years.” [4] The Nephilim *were* upon the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God went into the daughters of humankind, and they bore children to them. These *were* the mighty warriors that *were* from ancient times, men of renown.

Matthew 16:15 He said to them, “But who do you say *that* I am?”

Matthew 16:16 And Simon Peter answered *and* said, “You are the Christ, the Son of the living God!”

Matthew 16:17–18 And Jesus answered *and* said to him, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, because flesh and blood did not reveal *this* to you, but my Father *who is* in heaven. [18] And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overpower it!

Mark 9:2–8 And after six days, Jesus took along Peter and James and John, and led them to a high mountain by themselves alone. And he was transfigured before them, [3] and his clothing became radiant—extremely white, like no cloth refiner on earth can make so white. [4] And Elijah appeared to them together with Moses, and they were talking with Jesus. [5] And Peter answered *and* said to Jesus, “Rabbi, it is good *that* we are here! And let us make three shelters, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah.” [6] (For he did not know what he should answer, because they were terrified.) [7] And a cloud came, overshadowing them, and a voice came from the cloud, “This is my beloved Son. Listen to him!” [8] And suddenly, looking around, they no longer saw anyone with them but Jesus alone.

Colossians 1:13 who has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred *us* to the kingdom of the Son he loves,

Isaiah 61:1 *The* Spirit of the Lord Yahweh *is* upon me,

because Yahweh has anointed me,

he has sent me to bring good news *to the* oppressed,

to bind up the brokenhearted,

to proclaim release to *the* captives

and liberation to those who are bound,

1 Peter 3:22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him.

Colossians 3:1 Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ, seek the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God.

2 Timothy 2:12 if we endure, we will also reign with *him*;

if we deny *him*, he also will deny us;

Revelation 2:26 And the one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, I will give him authority over the nations,

Revelation 3:21 The one who conquers, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also have conquered and have sat down with my Father on his throne.

Chapter Twelve: The Cloud Rider

Daniel 7:1–8 In the first year of Belshazzar the king of Babylon, Daniel saw a dream and visions of his head *as he lay* on his bed; then he wrote down the dream *and the* summary of *the* words as follows: [2] Daniel explained and said, “I was looking in my vision in the night, and look, the four winds of heaven were stirring *up* the great sea. [3] And four great beasts *were* coming up from the sea, differing from one another. [4] The first *was* like *a* lion and had *the* wings of an eagle. I was watching until its wings were plucked off, and it was lifted up from the earth and it was raised on *its* feet like a human, and a human heart was given to it. [5] And look, another beast, a second one, looking like a bear. And it was raised up on one side and three tusks *were* in its mouth between its teeth, and so it was told, “Arise, eat much flesh!” [6] After this I was watching and look, another *beast* like a leopard; it had four wings of a bird on its back, and the beast had four heads, and dominion was given to it. [7] After this in the visions of the night I was looking and there was a fourth beast, terrifying and frightful and exceedingly strong, and it had great iron teeth, *and it was* devouring and crushing, and it stamped the remainder with its feet; and it was different from all *the other* beasts that preceded it and it had ten horns. [8] I was considering the horns, and look, another little horn came up among them, and three of the earlier horns were rooted out from before it, and there were eyes like the eyes of *a* human in this horn and *also* a mouth *that was* speaking boastfully.

Daniel 7:9–10 “I continued watching until thrones were placed and an Ancient of Days sat; his clothing *was* like white snow and the hair of his head *was* like pure wool and his throne *was* a flame of fire and its wheels *were* burning fire. [10] A stream of fire issued forth and flowed from his presence; thousands *upon* thousands served him and ten thousand *upon* ten thousand stood before him. The judge sat, and *the* books were opened.

Daniel 7:9 “I continued watching until thrones were placed and an Ancient of Days sat; his clothing *was* like white snow and the hair of his head *was* like pure wool and his throne *was* a flame of fire and its wheels *were* burning fire.

Daniel 7:10 A stream of fire issued forth and flowed from his presence;
thousands *upon* thousands served him and ten thousand *upon* ten thousand
stood before him. The judge sat, and *the* books were opened.

Daniel 7:11–12 "I continued watching then because of the noise of the
boastful words of the horn *who was* speaking; I continued watching until
the beast was slain and its body was destroyed, and it was given *over* to
burning with fire. [12] And *as for* the remainder of the beasts, their dominion
was taken away, but a prolongation of their life was given to them for a
season and a time.

Daniel 7:13–14 "I continued watching in the visions of the night, and look,
with the clouds of heaven *one* like a son of man was coming, and he came
to the Ancient of Days, and was presented before him. [14] And to him was
given dominion and glory and kingship that all the peoples, the nations, and
languages *would* serve him; his dominion *is* a dominion without end that
will not cease, and his kingdom *is one* that will not be destroyed.

Daniel 7:13 "I continued watching in the visions of the night, and look, with
the clouds of heaven *one* like a son of man was coming, and he came to the
Ancient of Days, and was presented before him.

Isaiah 19:1 An oracle of Egypt:

Look! Yahweh *is* riding on a swift cloud
and *is* coming *to* Egypt.
And the idols of Egypt will tremble in front of him,
and the heart of Egypt melts in his inner parts.

Deuteronomy 33:26 "There is no *one* like God, O, Jeshurun,
who rides *through* the heavens to your help,
and with his majesty *through the* skies.

Psalm 68:32–33 O kingdoms of the earth, sing to God;
sing praise to *the* Lord, *Selah*
[33] to the one who rides in the highest heavens of old.
See, he gives forth his voice, a mighty voice.

Psalm 104:1–4 Bless Yahweh, O my soul.
O Yahweh my God, you are very great.

You clothe yourself *with* splendor and majesty,
[2] *you* who cover *yourself* with light as *with* a garment,
who stretch out *the* heavens like a tent curtain,
[3] the one who sets beams in the waters *for* his upper chambers,
who makes clouds his chariot,
who rides on *the* wings of *the* wind,
[4] who makes his messengers *the* winds,
his attendants a flame of fire.

Matthew 26:59–66 Now the chief priests and the whole Sanhedrin were looking for false testimony against Jesus in order that they could put him to death. [60] And they did not find *it*, *although* many false witnesses came forward. And finally two came forward [61] *and* said, "This man said, 'I am able to destroy the temple of God and rebuild *it* within three days.' " [62] And the high priest stood up *and* said to him, "Do you reply nothing? What are these *people* testifying against you?" [63] But Jesus was silent. And the high priest said to him, "I put you under oath by the living God, that you tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God!" [64] Jesus said to him, "You have said *it*. But I tell you, from now *on* you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power and coming on the clouds of heaven." [65] Then the high priest tore his robes, saying, "He has blasphemed! What further need do we have of witnesses? Behold, you have just now heard the blasphemy! [66] What do you think?" And they answered *and* said, "He deserves death!"

Daniel 7:13 "I continued watching in the visions of the night, and look, with the clouds of heaven *one* like a son of man was coming, and he came to the Ancient of Days, and was presented before him.

Daniel 7:13 "I continued watching in the visions of the night, and look, with the clouds of heaven *one* like a son of man was coming, and he came to the Ancient of Days, and was presented before him.

Psalm 22:7–14 All *who* see me mock me.
They open wide *their* lips;
they shake *the* head, *saying*:
[8] "He trusts Yahweh. Let him rescue him.

Let him deliver him because he delights in him."
[9] Yet *you* took me from *the* belly;
you made me trust *while* on my mother's breasts.
[10] On you I was cast from *the* womb.
From my mother's belly you *have been* my God.
[11] Do not be far from me
because trouble *is* near;
because there is no helper.
[12] Many bulls have encircled me;
mighty *bulls* of Bashan have surrounded me.
[13] They open their mouth against me
like a lion tearing and roaring.
[14] I am poured out like water,
and all my bones are out of joint.
My heart is like wax;
it is melted within me.

Deuteronomy 4:19–20 And do this so that you do not lift your eyes *toward* heaven and observe the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heaven, and be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that Yahweh your God has allotted to all *of* the peoples under all *of* the heaven. [20] But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out from the furnace of iron, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to him, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,
at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,
he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,
according to the number of the children of Israel.
[9] For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,
Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Deuteronomy 17:1–3 "You shall not sacrifice to Yahweh your God an ox or sheep that has a physical defect of anything seriously wrong, for that *is* a detestable thing to Yahweh your God. [2] If *there* is found in one of your

towns that Yahweh your God *is* giving to you a man or a woman that does evil in the eyes of Yahweh your God to transgress his covenant [3] and by going and serving other gods and *so* he bows down to them and to the sun or to the moon or to any *of* the host of heaven which I have forbidden,

Deuteronomy 29:26–27 And they went and served other gods and bowed down to them, gods whom they did not know them and he had not allotted to them. [27] So the anger of Yahweh was kindled against that land to bring upon it all the curses written in this scroll,

Deuteronomy 32:17 They sacrificed to the demons, not God,

to gods whom they had not known,

new *gods who* came from recent times;

their ancestors had not known them.

Psalm 82:1–5 God stands in the divine assembly;

he administers judgment in the midst of *the* gods.

[2] "How long will you judge unjustly

and show favoritism to the wicked? *Selah*

[3] Judge *on behalf of the* helpless and *the* orphan;

provide justice *to the* afflicted and *the* poor.

[4] Rescue *the* helpless and *the* needy;

deliver *them* from the hand of *the* wicked."

[5] They do not know or consider.

They go about in the darkness,

so that all *the* foundations of *the* earth are shaken.

Psalm 82:6–8 I have said, "You *are* gods,

and sons of the Most High, all of you.

[7] However, you will die like men,

and you will fall like one of the princes."

[8] Rise up, O God, judge the earth,

because you shall inherit all the nations.

Daniel 7:14 And to him was given dominion and glory and kingship that all the peoples, the nations, and languages *would* serve him; his dominion *is* a

dominion without end that will not cease, and his kingdom *is one* that will not be destroyed.

Daniel 7:13–14 “I continued watching in the visions of the night, and look, with the clouds of heaven *one* like a son of man was coming, and he came to the Ancient of Days, and was presented before him. [14] And to him was given dominion and glory and kingship that all the peoples, the nations, and languages *would* serve him; his dominion *is* a dominion without end that will not cease, and his kingdom *is one* that will not be destroyed.

Ephesians 1:20–21 which he has worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating *him* at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, [21] above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one,

Luke 10:18 So he said to them, “I saw Satan falling like lightning from heaven.

Ephesians 2:8–9 For by grace you are saved through faith, and this *is* not from yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; [9] *it is* not from works, so that no one can boast.

Matthew 28:19–20 Therefore, go *and* make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you all the days until the end of the age.”

Chapter Thirteen: The Great Reversal

Acts 2:1–8 And when the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together
in the same *place*. [2] And suddenly a sound like a violent rushing wind came
from heaven and filled the whole house where they were sitting. [3] And
divided tongues like fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. [4]
And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other
languages as the Spirit gave them *ability* to speak out.

[5] Now there were Jews residing in Jerusalem, devout men from every
nation under heaven. [6] And *when* this sound occurred, the crowd gathered
and was in confusion, because each one was hearing them speaking in his
own language. [7] And they were astounded and astonished, saying, “Behold,
are not all these who are speaking Galileans? [8] And how do we hear, each
one *of us*, in our own native language?

2 Kings 2:1 When Yahweh was about to take Elijah up in the storm *to* heaven, Elijah and Elisha went from Gilgal.

2 Kings 2:11 Then they *were* walking, talking as they went. Suddenly a fiery chariot with horses of fire *appeared* and separated between the two of them. Elijah went up in the storm *to* the heavens

Job 38:1 Then Yahweh answered Job from the storm, and he said,

Job 40:6 Then Yahweh answered Job from the storm, and he said,

Ezekiel 1:4 And I looked, and look! A storm wind *was* coming from the north, a great cloud, and fire flashing back and forth, and brightness around *and* within it, and from its midst *it was* like *the* outward appearance of amber stone from the midst of the fire.

Isaiah 6:4 And the pivots of the thresholds shook from the sound of those who called, and the house was filled *with* smoke.

Isaiah 6:6 Then one of the seraphs flew to me, and in his hand *was* a hot coal he had taken from the altar with tongs.

Daniel 7:9 “I continued watching until thrones were placed and an Ancient of Days sat; his clothing *was* like white snow and the hair of his head *was* like pure wool and his throne *was* a flame of fire and its wheels *were* burning fire.

Exodus 3:2 And the angel of Yahweh appeared to him in a flame of fire from the midst of a bush, and he looked, and there was the bush burning with fire, but the bush was not being consumed.

Exodus 19:18 And Mount Sinai was all wrapped in smoke because Yahweh went down on it in the fire, and its smoke went up like the smoke of a smelting furnace, and the whole mountain trembled greatly.

Exodus 20:18 And all the people *were* seeing the thunder and the lightning and the sound of the ram’s horn and the mountain smoking, and the people saw, and they trembled, and they stood at a distance.

Deuteronomy 4:19–20 And do this so that you do not lift your eyes *toward* heaven and observe the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heaven, and be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that Yahweh your God has allotted to all *of* the peoples under all *of* the heaven.

[20] But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out from the furnace of iron, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to him, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,

at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,

he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,

according to the number of the children of Israel.

[9] For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,

Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Deuteronomy 4:19–20 And do this so that you do not lift your eyes *toward* heaven and observe the sun and the moon and the stars, all the host of the heaven, and be led astray and bow down to them and serve them, things that Yahweh your God has allotted to all *of* the peoples under all *of* the heaven. [20] But Yahweh has taken you and brought you out from the furnace of iron, from Egypt, to be a people of inheritance to him, as it is this day.

Deuteronomy 32:8–9 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,

at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,

he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,

according to the number of the children of Israel.

[9] For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,

Jacob the share of his inheritance.

Genesis 11:7 Come, let us go down and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand each other's language."

Deuteronomy 32:8 When the Most High apportioned *the* nations,

at his dividing *up* of the sons of humankind,

he fixed the boundaries of *the* peoples,

according to the number of the children of Israel.

Acts 2:41 So those who accepted his message were baptized, and on that day about three thousand souls were added.

Ephesians 1:20–21 which he has worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating *him* at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, [21] above all

rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one,

Ephesians 6:12 because our struggle is not against blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Colossians 2:15 *When he* had disarmed the rulers and the authorities, he made a display of *them* in public, triumphing over them by it.

Ephesians 1:20–21 which he has worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating *him* at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, [21] above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one,

Ephesians 3:10 in order that the many-sided wisdom of God might be made known now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places* through the church,

Ephesians 6:12 because our struggle is not against blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the world rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *forces* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

Colossians 2:15 *When he* had disarmed the rulers and the authorities, he made a display of *them* in public, triumphing over them by it.

1 Corinthians 2:6 Now we do speak wisdom among the mature, but wisdom not of this age or of the rulers of this age, who are perishing,

Ephesians 1:20–21 which he has worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating *him* at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, [21] above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one,

Ephesians 3:10 in order that the many-sided wisdom of God might be made known now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places* through the church,

Colossians 1:16 because all *things* in the heavens and on the earth were created by him, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers, all *things* were created through him and for him,

Ephesians 1:20–21 which he has worked in Christ, raising him from the dead and seating *him* at his right hand in the heavenly *places*, [21] above all rule and authority and power and lordship and every name named, not only in this age but also in the coming one,

1 Corinthians 8:5 For even if after all *there* are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, just as *there* are many gods and many lords,

Colossians 1:16 because all *things* in the heavens and on the earth were created by him, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or powers, all *things* were created through him and for him,

Romans 15:24 whenever I travel to Spain. For I hope *while I* am passing through to see you and to be sent on my way by you, whenever I have first enjoyed your *company* for a while.

Romans 15:28 Therefore, *after I* have accomplished this and sealed this fruit *for delivery* to them, I will depart by way of you for Spain,

Romans 11:25–26 For I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, of this mystery, so that you will not be wise in your own sight, that a partial hardening has happened to Israel, until the full number of the Gentiles has come in, [26] and so all Israel will be saved, just as it is written,

> "The deliverer will come out of Zion;
>
> he will turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

1 Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and the Spirit of God dwells in you?

1 Corinthians 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

Hebrews 1:13 But to which of the angels has he ever said,

> "Sit down at my right hand,
>
> until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet."

1 John 4:4 You are from God, little children, and have conquered them, because the one *who is* in you is greater than the one *who is* in the world.

Chapter Fourteen: Not of This World

John 17:16 They are not of the world, just as I am not of the world.

Matthew 28:19–20 Therefore, go *and* make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, [20] teaching them to observe everything I have commanded you, and behold, I am with you all the days until the end of the age."

1 Corinthians 6:19 Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?

1 Corinthians 3:16 Do you not know that you are God's temple and the Spirit of God dwells in you?

Ephesians 2:19 Consequently, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens of the saints and members of the household of God,

Ephesians 2:21–22 in whom the whole building, joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, [22] in whom you also are built up together into a dwelling place of God in *the* Spirit.

Matthew 18:20 For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there in the midst of them."

Leviticus 16:8 Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for Yahweh and one for Azazel.

Leviticus 16:10 But he must present alive before Yahweh the goat on which the lot for Azazel fell to make atonement for himself, to send it away into the desert to Azazel.

1 Corinthians 5:5 *I have decided* to hand over such a person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

1 Corinthians 5:9–13 I wrote to you in the letter not to associate with sexually immoral people. [10] By no means *did I mean* the sexually immoral people of this world or the greedy people and swindlers or idolaters, since

then you would have to depart out of the world. [11] But now I have written to you not to associate with any so-called brother, if he is a sexually immoral person or a greedy person or an idolater or an abusive person or a drunkard or a swindler—with such a person not even to eat. [12] For what *is it* to me to judge those outside? Should you not judge those inside? [13] But those outside God will judge. Remove the evil person from among yourselves.

1 Corinthians 5:5 *I have decided* to hand over such a person to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, in order that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord.

Galatians 5:24 Now those who belong to Christ have crucified the flesh together with its feelings and its desires.

1 Corinthians 11:32–33 But *if we* are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined, in order that we will not be condemned with the world.

[33] So then, my brothers, *when you* come together in order to eat *the Lord's supper*, wait for one another.

1 Peter 3:14–22 But even if you might suffer for the sake of righteousness, *you are* blessed. And do not be afraid of their intimidation or be disturbed, [15] but set Christ apart *as* Lord in your hearts, always ready to *make* a defense to anyone who asks you *for* an accounting concerning the hope *that is* in you. [16] But *do so* with courtesy and respect, having a good conscience, so that in *the things* in which you are slandered, the ones who malign your good conduct in Christ may be put to shame. [17] For *it is* better to suffer for doing good, if God wills it, than for doing evil.

[18] For Christ also suffered once for sins,
the just for the unjust,
in order that he could bring you to God,
being put to death in the flesh,
but made alive in the spirit,
[19] in which also he went *and* proclaimed to the spirits in prison,

[20] who were formerly disobedient, when the patience of God waited in the days of Noah, *while* an ark was being constructed, in which a few—that is, eight souls—were rescued through water. [21] And also, corresponding to *this*,

baptism now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, [22] who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him.

Romans 5:19 For just as through the disobedience of the one man, the many were made sinners, so also through the obedience of the one, the many will be made righteous.

Genesis 5:18–24 When Jared had lived one hundred and sixty-two years, he fathered Enoch. [19] And after Jared had fathered Enoch, he lived eight hundred years, and fathered sons and daughters. [20] And all the days of Jared were nine hundred and sixty-two years, and he died.

[21] When Enoch had lived sixty-five years, he fathered Methuselah. [22] And Enoch walked with God after he fathered Methuselah three hundred years, and fathered sons and daughters. [23] And all the days of Enoch were three hundred and sixty-five years. [24] And Enoch walked with God, and he was no more, for God took him.

Genesis 5:24 And Enoch walked with God, and he was no more, for God took him.

Genesis 6:1–4 And it happened *that*, when humankind began to multiply on the face of the ground, daughters were born to them. [2] Then the sons of God saw the daughters of humankind, that they *were* beautiful. And they took for themselves wives from all that they chose. [3] And Yahweh said, “My Spirit shall not abide with humankind forever in that he *is* also flesh. And his days *shall be* one hundred and twenty years.” [4] The Nephilim *were* upon the earth in those days, and also afterward, when the sons of God went into the daughters of humankind, and they bore children to them. These *were* the mighty warriors that *were* from ancient times, men of renown.

2 Peter 2:4–5 For if God did not spare the angels who sinned, but held *them* captive in Tartarus with chains of darkness *and* handed *them* over to be kept for judgment, [5] and did not spare the ancient world, but preserved Noah, a proclaimer of righteousness, and seven others *when he* brought a flood on the world of the ungodly,

Jude 6 And *the* angels who did not keep to their own domain but deserted their proper dwelling place, he has kept in eternal bonds under deep gloom

for the judgment of the great day,

1 Peter 3:22 who is at the right hand of God, having gone into heaven, with angels and authorities and powers having been subjected to him.

Romans 6:1–11 What therefore shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, in order that grace may increase? [2] May it never be! How can we who died to sin still live in it? [3] Or do you not know that as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? [4] Therefore we have been buried with him through baptism into death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we may live a new way of life. [5] For if we have become identified with *him* in the likeness of his death, certainly also we will be *identified with him in the likeness* of *his* resurrection, [6] knowing this, that our old man was crucified together with *him*, in order that the body of sin may be done away with, *that* we may no longer be enslaved to sin. [7] For the one who has died has been freed from sin.

[8] Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him, [9] knowing that Christ, *because he* has been raised from the dead, is going to die no more, death no longer being master over him. [10] For that *death* he died, he died to sin once and never again, but that *life* he lives, he lives to God. [11] So also you, consider yourselves to be dead to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

1 Peter 3:21 And also, corresponding to *this*, baptism now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

Exodus 19:6 but you, you will *belong* to me *as* a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' These are the words that you will speak to the Israelites."

John 8:23 And he said to them, "You are from below; I am from above. You are from this world; I am not from this world.

1 John 4:4 You are from God, little children, and have conquered them, because the one *who is* in you is greater than the one *who is* in the world.

Chapter Fifteen: Partakers of the Divine Nature

Ephesians 2:8–9 For by grace you are saved through faith, and this *is* not from yourselves, *it is* the gift of God; [9] *it is* not from works, so that no one can boast.

Job 38:7–8 when *the* morning stars were singing together

and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

[8] "Or *who* shut *the* sea in with doors

at its bursting, *when* it went out of *the* womb,

1 John 3:1–3 See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called children of God, and we are! Because of this the world does not know us: because it did not know him. [2] Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. [3] And everyone who has this hope in him purifies himself, just as that one is pure.

2 Peter 1:4 through which things he has bestowed on us his precious and very great promises, so that through these you may become sharers of the divine nature *after* escaping from the corruption *that is* in the world because of evil desire,

1 John 3:1 See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called children of God, and we are! Because of this the world does not know us: because it did not know him.

Genesis 12:1–8 And Yahweh said to Abram, "Go out from your land and from your relatives, and from the house of your father, to the land that I will show you. [2] And I will make you a great nation, and I will bless you, and I will make your name great. And you will be a blessing. [3] And I will bless those who bless you, and those who curse you I will curse. And all families of the earth will be blessed in you."

[4] And Abram went *out* as Yahweh had told him, and Lot went with him. Now Abram was seventy-five years old when he went out from Haran. [5] And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his nephew, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and all the persons that they had acquired in Haran, and they went out to go to the land of Canaan. And they went to the land of Canaan. [6] And Abram traveled through the land up to the place of Shechem, to the Oak of Moreh. Now the Canaanites *were* in the

land at that time. [7] And Yahweh appeared to Abram and said, “To your offspring I will give this land.” And he built an altar there to Yahweh, who had appeared to him. [8] And he moved on from there to the hill country, east of Bethel. And he pitched his tent at Bethel on the west, and at Ai on the east. And he built an altar there to Yahweh. And he called on the name of Yahweh.

Genesis 11:1–9 Now the whole earth *had* one language and the same words. [2] And as people migrated from the east they found a plain in the land of Shinar and settled there. [3] And they said to each other, “Come, let us make bricks and burn them thoroughly.” And they had brick for stone and they had tar for mortar. [4] And they said, “Come, let us build ourselves a city and a tower whose top *reaches to* the heavens. And let us make a name for ourselves, lest we be scattered over the face of the whole earth.”

[5] Then Yahweh came down to see the city and the tower that humankind was building. [6] And Yahweh said, “Behold, they are one people with one language, and this is only the beginning of what they will do. So now nothing that they intend to do will be impossible for them. [7] Come, let us go down and confuse their language there, so that they will not understand each other’s language.” [8] So Yahweh scattered them from there over the face of the whole earth, and they stopped building the city. [9] Therefore its name was called Babel, for there Yahweh confused the language of the whole earth, and there Yahweh scattered them over the face of the whole earth.

Ephesians 3:3–6 According to revelation the mystery was made known to me, just as I wrote beforehand in brief, [4] so that you may be able when you read to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ [5] (which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit): [6] *that* the Gentiles are fellow heirs, and fellow members of the body, and fellow sharers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

Galatians 3:26–29 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, [27] for as many *of you* as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. [28] There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. [29] And if you *are* Christ’s, then you are descendants of Abraham, heirs according to the promise.

Deuteronomy 32:9 For Yahweh's portion *was* his people,

Jacob the share of his inheritance.

John 1:12 But as many as received him—to those who believe in his name —he gave to them authority to become children of God,

Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus,

Romans 8:14 For all those who are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God.

Romans 8:15 For you have not received a spirit of slavery *leading* to fear again, but you have received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry out, "Abba! Father!"

Romans 8:23 Not only *this*, but we ourselves also, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves *while we* await eagerly *our* adoption, the redemption of our body.

Ephesians 1:5 having predestined us to adoption through Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will,

Galatians 4:4 But when the fullness of time came, God sent out his Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

Hebrews 1:4 having become by so much better than the angels, by as much as he has inherited a more excellent name than theirs.

Hebrews 1:5–6 For to which of the angels did he ever say,

"You are my son,

today I have begotten you,"

and again,

"I will be his father,

and he will be my son"?

6 And again, when he brings the firstborn into the world, he says,

"And let all *the* angels of God worship him."

Hebrews 2:6–9 But someone testified somewhere, saying,

"What is man, that you remember him,

or the son of man, that you care for him?

7 You made him for a short *time* lower than the angels;

you crowned him with glory and honor;

8 you subjected all *things* under his feet.

For in subjecting all *things*, he left nothing *that was* not subject to him. But now we do not yet see all *things* subjected to him, 9 but we see Jesus, for a short *time* made lower than the angels, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, so that apart from God he might taste death on behalf of everyone.

Hebrews 2:10–13 For it was fitting for him for whom *are* all *things* and through whom *are* all *things* in bringing many sons to glory to perfect the originator of their salvation through sufferings. 11 For both the one who sanctifies and the ones who are sanctified *are* all from one, for which reason he is not ashamed to call them brothers, 12 saying,

"I will proclaim your name to my brothers;

in the midst of the assembly I will sing in praise of you."

13 And again,

"I will trust in him."

And again,

"Behold, I and the children God has given me."

Romans 8:18–23 For I consider that the sufferings of the present time are not worthy *to be compared* with the glory that is about to be revealed to us. 19 For the eagerly expecting creation awaits eagerly the revelation of the sons of God. 20 For the creation has been subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of the one who subjected *it*, in hope 21 that the creation itself also will be set free from its servility to decay, into the glorious freedom of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groans together and suffers agony together until now. 23 Not only *this*, but we ourselves also, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves *while we* await eagerly *our* adoption, the redemption of our body.

Romans 8:29 because *those* whom he foreknew, he also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, so that he should be the firstborn among many brothers.

2 Corinthians 3:18 And we all, with unveiled face, reflecting the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from glory into glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 15:53 For it is necessary *for* this perishable *body* to put on incorruptibility, and this mortal *body* to put on immortality.

2 Peter 1:4 through which things he has bestowed on us his precious and very great promises, so that through these you may become sharers of the divine nature *after* escaping from the corruption *that is* in the world because of evil desire,

1 John 3:2 Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever he is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is.

Romans 8:29 because *those* whom he foreknew, he also predestined *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, so that he should be the firstborn among many brothers.

Chapter Sixteen: Ruling over Angels

Colossians 1:13 who has rescued us from the domain of darkness and transferred *us* to the kingdom of the Son he loves,

1 Kings 22:19–23 And he said, “Therefore, hear the word of Yahweh. I saw Yahweh sitting on his throne with all the hosts of heaven standing beside him from his right hand and from his left *hand*. [20] And Yahweh said, ‘Who will entice Ahab so that he will go up and fall at Ramoth-Gilead?’ Then this one was saying one thing and the other one was saying another. [21] Then a spirit came out and stood before Yahweh and said, ‘I will entice him,’ and Yahweh said to him, ‘How?’ [22] He said, ‘I will go out and I will be a false spirit in the mouth of all his prophets.’ And he said, ‘You shall entice and succeed, go out and do so.’ [23] So then, see that Yahweh has placed a false spirit in the mouth of all of these your prophets, and Yahweh has spoken disaster concerning you.”

1 Corinthians 6:3 Do you not know that we will judge angels, not to mention ordinary matters?

Revelation 2:25–28 Nevertheless, hold fast to what you have until I come. [26] And the one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, I will give him authority over the nations, [27] and “he will shepherd them with an iron rod; he will break *them* in pieces like jars made of clay,” [28] as I also have received from my Father, and I will give him the morning star.

Revelation 2:28 as I also have received from my Father, and I will give him the morning star.

Job 38:7 when *the* morning stars were singing together
and all the sons of God shouted for joy?

Numbers 24:17 I see him, but not now;
I behold him, but not near;
a star will go out from Jacob,
and a scepter will rise from Israel;
it will crush the foreheads of Moab

and destroy all the children of Seth.

Revelation 22:16 “I, Jesus, sent my angel to testify to you about these *things* for the churches. I am the root and the descendant of David, the bright morning star.”

Revelation 2:25–28 Nevertheless, hold fast to what you have until I come. [26] And the one who conquers and who keeps my works until the end, I will give him authority over the nations, [27] and “he will shepherd them with an iron rod; he will break *them* in pieces like jars made of clay,” [28] as I also have received from my Father, and I will give him the morning star.

Revelation 3:20–21 Behold, I stand at the door and knock! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, indeed I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me. [21] The one who conquers, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also have conquered and have sat down with my Father on his throne.

Revelation 3:20–21 Behold, I stand at the door and knock! If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, indeed I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with me. [21] The one who conquers, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also have conquered and have sat down with my Father on his throne.

Revelation 22:1–5 And he showed me the river of the water of life, clear as crystal, coming out from the throne of God and of the Lamb [2] in the middle of its street, and on both sides of the river *is* the tree of life, producing twelve fruits—yielding its fruit according to every month—and the leaves of the tree *are* for the healing of the nations. [3] And there will not be any curse *any* longer, and the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his slaves will serve him, [4] and they will see his face, and his name *will be* on their foreheads. [5] And night will not exist *any* longer, and they will not have need of the light of a lamp and the light of the sun, because the Lord God will give light to them, and they will reign forever and ever.

Revelation 2:7 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To the one who conquers, I will grant to him to eat from the tree of life which is in the paradise of God.’

Revelation 2:11 The one who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. The one who conquers will never be harmed by the second

death.’

Revelation 21:8 But *as* for the cowards and unbelievers and detestable persons and murderers and sexually immoral people and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their share *is* in the lake that burns with fire and sulphur, which is the second death.

1 Corinthians 2:9 But just as it is written,

“*Things* which eye has not seen and ear has not heard,
and have not entered into the heart of man,
all that God has prepared for those who love him.”

2 Corinthians 1:3–9 Blessed *is* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, [4] who comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those *who are* in all affliction with the comfort with which *we* ourselves are comforted by God. [5] For just as the sufferings of Christ overflow to us, thus through Christ our comfort overflows also. [6] But if we are afflicted, *it is* for your comfort and salvation; if we are comforted, *it is* for your comfort that is at work in the patient endurance of the same sufferings that we also suffer. [7] And our hope for you *is* firm, *because we* know that as you are sharers in the sufferings, so also *you will be sharers* in the comfort.

[8] For we do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, concerning our affliction that happened in the *province of* Asia, that we were burdened to an extraordinary degree, beyond *our* strength, so that we were in despair even of living. [9] But *we* ourselves had the sentence of death in ourselves, so that we would not be putting confidence in ourselves, but in God who raises the dead,

Revelation 3:21 The one who conquers, I will grant to him to sit down with me on my throne, as I also have conquered and have sat down with my Father on his throne.

Conclusion

Ephesians 2:12 that you were at that time apart from Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, not

having hope, and without God in the world.

Ephesians 4:18 being darkened in understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance *that* is in them, because of the hardness of their heart,

Colossians 1:21 And although you were formerly alienated and enemies in attitude, because of your evil deeds,

Acts 10:26–27 But Peter helped him up, saying, “Get up! I myself am also a man!” [27] And *as he* conversed with him, he went in and found many *people* gathered.

Hebrews 1:14 Are they not all spirits engaged in special service, sent on assignment for the sake of those who are going to inherit salvation?